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Dumas ends visit to Beirut with aid plans

BEIRUT (R) — French Foreign Minister Roland Dumas, ending a two-day visit to Beirut, said Friday his country was studying ways to help Lebanon's war-shattered economy. "We discussed infrastructure and rehabilitation... (French) experts are here and have made studies on electricity, water, and telecommunications," Mr. Dumas told reporters at a news conference before leaving Beirut. Mr. Dumas, the highest ranking French minister to visit Lebanon in six years, met President Elias Hrawi, Prime Minister Hussein Huseini, Prime Minister Omar Karame, Foreign Minister Paris Bouser, and religious leaders. The French minister said on Thursday his talks touched on the Lebanese army receiving helicopter repairs from France in return for Mirage fighters Beirut bought from Paris before the civil war broke out in 1975. The Lebanese government estimates by \$15 billion the damage the economic infrastructure has suffered during the country's 15 years of civil war. Mr. Dumas said France was backing Lebanon in its campaign to regain a 15-kilometre deep Israeli-held "security zone" in the south and other Lebanese areas where Syria has some 40,000 troops deployed with the approval of the Beirut government.

Rafsanjani gets big welcome in Sudan

NICOSIA (R) — Iranian President Akbar Hashemi Rafsanjani arrived in Khartoum Friday night to a big reception from flag-waving Sudanese. Iran's official news agency IRNA reported. It said massive crowds chanting pro-Iranian slogans gathered at the airport. On the road into the capital, crowds forced Mr. Rafsanjani's motorcade to halt at several places. Relations between Iran and Sudan have been improving steadily since March, when Khartoum introduced a new penal code derived from Islamic Sharia law. Mr. Rafsanjani, on his way home from an Islamic summit in Senegal, will be in Sudan for three days. He is expected to address a mass rally in a Khartoum suburb, meet religious scholars and attend a mass marriage ceremony of about 1,000 couples in central Sudan. State media carried messages from political leaders urging people to come to the airport and welcome "the freedom fighter." The anti-imperialist Muslim strongman. Photographs of Mr. Rafsanjani and late Iranian leader Ayatollah Khomeini lined the road from the airport into Khartoum. The visit is first by an Iranian leader to Sudan. Sudan's military leader Omar Hassan Al Bashir visited Iran earlier this year.

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Sharif Zeid assured of 'yes' vote in House

By Mariam M. Shabin
Jordan Times Staff Reporter

AMMAN — The government of Prime Minister Sharif Zeid Ben Shaker faces its first political test when it goes before the Lower House of Parliament for a vote of confidence Sunday, and most observers say that the House will vote "yes" with a comfortable margin in support of the career military officer-turned-royal advisor-turned prime minister. According to parliamentary resources and observers, the government could hope for between 60 and 70 votes over and above the needed majority of 41 votes in the House, which begins its vote of confidence session Friday.

It was not possible Friday to determine when the actual voting would take place after speeches by deputies in the 80-member House, but most expected it to take place on late Monday or early Tuesday.

The central issue seen as assuming the key slot in the House debate is Jordan's participation in the American-sponsored Middle East peace talks.

The Muslim Brotherhood — the largest single bloc in parliament with 22 members — is the highest vocal opponent of the peace process and is expected to vote en masse against or abstain from voting.

Brotherhood spokesmen say that the group was asked to join the government but it stayed away because of its opposition to any peace talks with Israel.

According to observers and group spokesmen, it is a foregone conclusion that the 17-member "Constitution Bloc," the 16-member National Bloc and the 15-member Independent Islamic Bloc will vote "yes" since members of the three groups are included in the cabinet of Sharif Zeid, who assumed office in November.

Four members of the leftist 10-member Democratic Bloc are expected to follow suit, and thus the government is assured of a minimum 43 votes in the House.

The expected support of at least six of the 10 independent members of the House will give the government a "very comfortable margin," noted a parliament insider.

While the government is thus assured passing the popularity test with flying colours, it is also hoping that the number of votes against it on the House floor will be a bare minimum.

Since constitutional provisions stipulate that every abstention would be considered as a vote in favour of the government, the position and voting pattern of the Brotherhood looms very much into focus.

According to sources in the Brotherhood, a strong debate is raging among the deputies of the fundamentalist group whether to abstain or to cast a "no" vote.

"Our main opposition to the government is its participation in the peace process," said Ali Hawamdeh, a Brotherhood deputy. At the same time, Dr. Hawamdeh held out the possibility that the group might abstain, but no final decision has been reached yet. However, he stressed that there was no split in the group and that there was no understanding of a notion that individual Brotherhood deputies should vote as they choose.

Denying suggestions that

Talks resume Monday; problems partially solved

By Nermene Murad in Washington

AFTER TWO DAYS of drawn-out "corridor diplomacy," bilateral talks between leaders of the joint Jordanian-Palestinian and Israeli delegations adjourned for the weekend, having established the basis for independent Palestinian representation but falling short of reaching accord on mechanisms to resume negotiations on this basis.

According to informed sources, "there is a possibility" that the three leaders of the delegations will meet Sunday to iron out remaining differences on establishing the two-track approach. If the meeting takes place and agreement is reached on mechanisms and agenda for continuing the talks the full delegations could start launching substantive negotiations in the

officially designated rooms at the U.S. State Department on Monday.

If the meeting does not take place, however, the leaders of the delegations will go back to their corridor at the official site and take up negotiations from where they left off on Thursday. It all depends on contacts over the weekend, the sources said.

The talks over the past two days have been defined by Jordanian delegates as "questions of principles" which may be procedural in nature but have "great substantive impact" on the development of negotiations.

"The issues that are being discussed are not trivial procedural issues. They are questions of principles which have to be established and agreed upon from the beginning," Jawad Anani, a senior Jordanian delegate, told the Jordan Times in an interview.

"There is a common understanding

that the emphasis on corridor diplomacy and procedural matters is not warranted. Some think it is a waste of time, but to us the issues are of principal value," Dr. Anani said.

"Their solution now will affect to a great degree the future of deliberations agenda items."

The Israeli delegation accepted the two-track approach to its talks with the parties in the joint delegation Thursday but snags remained over how often a plenary meeting, which would bring the joint delegation and Israelis together, would meet and how many delegates from each of the third parties would attend.

According to Dr. Anani, the Israelis have acknowledged the two-track approach and agreement has been reached that the joint delegation would be composed of two parties — a Jordanian party and a Palestinian one.

During the two days of proposals and counter-proposals, the Israelis were trying to undermine the Palestinian's equal status with other parties while the Jordanians and Palestinians

were careful to reject any moves which would undermine the Palestinian national status.

"We had a long discussion over the naming of the two tracks," Dr. Anani explained. "While the Israelis wanted them to be called Israel-Jordan and an Israel-Palestinian track we insisted that if Israel did not acquiesce to calling the second track an Israel-Palestinian track then it should be the Israel-Palestinian track to ensure equality," he said.

"One letter, in this case (i for Israeli), took a long time to negotiate and confirm. We needed to address details closely to avoid their ramifications on substance," Dr. Anani added.

"The bottom line is do the Palestinians have a separate identity, representation and personality? The Israelis wanted to obviate that. That is why we had to negotiate the two tracks and the Israelis have acknowledged that there are two tracks — a Palestinian-Israeli one and a Jordan-Israeli one."

The original dispute between the

joint Jordanian-Palestinian delegation and the Israelis was over "equality."

"We (Jordanians) were equal to the Israelis because Jordan is a full sovereign state and this means that we had equality," Dr. Anani said.

To press the equality issue between the Israelis and Palestinians, the Palestinians expressed preference that they be represented by 14 members in the plenary meeting.

"The Israelis of course reject this. But the joint position of Jordanians and Palestinians is that if that is not tenable, then only the heads of the Israeli, Jordanian and Palestinian parties would meet in lieu of plenary meetings which would include all of the three parties' members," Dr. Anani explained.

The subject of frequency of the plenary meetings, their agenda and how they should be called remain the contentious points between the joint delegation and the Israelis.

No final agreement has as yet been reached between the negotiators over these points and the details of the

proposals and counter proposals on this issue are complicated but, according to Dr. Anani, "are questions of principles."

The Israelis continue to insist on frequent plenary meetings to press the joint nature of the Jordanian-Palestinian delegation. The Jordanians and Palestinians, on the other hand, want these meetings to be held only at the request of the three negotiating parties i.e. Israeli, Jordanian and Palestinian.

The Israelis have so far rejected this request by saying that it would give the Arab side "veto power over the holding of plenary meetings and they would never meet."

The Israelis also have rejected an Arab proposal that plenary meetings be held at the level of the heads of the parties and not include all the delegation members.

They argued that while the heads of the three parties to the bilateral negotiations could hold meetings, there also should be plenary meetings which would bring members of the parties to the negotiations room.

"They say that meetings by the heads of the parties does not preclude the plenary meetings they are demanding," Dr. Anani said.

Another complication which arose between the joint delegation and Israelis, but which is now almost resolved, was over how many delegates would attend the two meetings of the Israel-Jordan track and the Israeli-Palestinian track.

The Israelis were asking for a seven-to-seven member formula but the Palestinians were asking for a maximum of the full 14 members from each party, but certainly over half, to the bilateral negotiations.

The reasoning behind the Palestinian preference was because of the Jordanian element within their party, which is expected to be represented by two members. "Having two Jordanian members out of a Palestinian party of seven would be higher percentage than two out of 14," Dr. Anani said.

The joint delegation has proposed

(Continued on page 5)

Peace needs broader vision of coexistence, rights — Prince Hassan

Jordan calls for confidence-building Israeli measures starting with settlement freeze

By Serene Halasa and P.V. Vivekanand

AMMAN — Israel can never hope to ensure its security under the present conditions if it believes in continued occupation of Arab territories and maintaining a massive stock of weapons of mass destruction; instead it should start implementing confidence-building measures starting with a freeze in settlements in the occupied territories as a sign of goodwill in the ongoing peace talks with Arabs, Jordan said Thursday.

A broad vision of coexistence based on the inalienable rights of people and a spirit of cooperation and recognition of and solutions to the disparities among the countries of the Middle East is the only guarantee for a lasting peace in the region, His Royal Highness Crown Prince Hassan said.

The Crown Prince, reaffirming the Jordanian perspective of the "trans-national" nature of and approach to the issues involved in the Arab-Israeli conflict, called on all parties to the conflict to rise above dogma, prejudice and traditional hostilities and be tolerant towards all ideologies.

Prince Hassan, addressing a fund-raising gathering in Amman, said Jordan believes that a conference on security and cooperation in the Middle East could

be the forum to "eliminate the political economy of despair."

The Crown Prince indicated that Jordan would like to see the multilateral phase of the ongoing Middle East peace talks assume the shape of the sought-for conference. The multilateral phase, which will tackle issues related to water, refugees, disarmament and the environment, is slated to begin in Moscow Jan. 28-29.

"Democratisation, freedom of expression, human rights and greater awareness of a reliance on the political and economic dimensions of security provide a route towards the alternative political economy of peace, security and progress," the Crown Prince said.

See page 4 for full text of the Crown Prince's prepared speech

"True peace is not merely the absence of tension; it is the presence of justice," the Crown Prince quoted the late American civil rights campaigner Martin Luther King and pointed out that although there was no major Arab-Israeli war in the last two decades the features of peace — stability, security, respect for personal and political rights — are missing in the region.

"Injustice is... being perpetrated against the personal, national and political rights of Palestinians at the most basic levels," he said.

As a simple example, he pointed out that while Israel is exploiting the water resources of the occupied territories

and Jordan, the Palestinians — the owners of the resources — account for one per cent of all water used in Israel.

Addressing the gathering of about 200 people organised by the American-Arab Anti-Discrimination Committee (ADC), the Crown Prince also took the opportunity to roundly reject the Israeli notion and claim that the Palestinian people already have a homeland in Jordan.

"Jordan is, but not Palestine," he declared.

In his prepared speech and additional off-the-cuff remarks, the Crown Prince addressed American lawmakers and said Congress had to rise above the narrow interests of lobbies which support Israel's settlement programme in the occupied territories and those related to the military establishment which thrives on massive arms sales to the Middle East.

The Crown Prince referred to the Israeli refusal to deal separately with Palestinians and its insistence on negotiating with the joint Jordanian-Palestinian delegation as such in bilateral talks in Washington. He reaffirmed that the joint team represented the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan and the Palestinian people only to the extent of circumventing Israel rejection and that the two sides will insist on separate, independent negotiations with Israel.

"It has always been Jordan's aim to bring about a peaceful and equitable resolution to the Palestine question and the concomitant Arab-Israeli conflict," the Crown Prince added. It was in this vein that Jordan agreed to



the idea of extending an umbrella to the Palestinians and this framework does not imply Jordanians negotiating on behalf of the Palestinians.

The Crown Prince expressed concern over the breakup of the Soviet Union — a co-sponsor along with the United States of the Middle East peace process which was launched with the Oct. 30 conference held in Madrid — and hope that "the impetus from Moscow as well as Washington can be sustained, in whatever form."

The Crown Prince said that the basis of Jordan's efforts has always been the will of the international community embodied in U.N. Security Council resolutions 242 and 338 which "provide the groundwork for practicable formula for ending the conflict in our region, by calling for the exchange of territory for peace while safeguarding the security of all states in the region, including Israel."

The hollowness in the apparent Israeli belief in territorial control and military might as a guarantee for its security was proved during the Gulf war, (where long-range Iraqi missiles pounded Israeli cities), the Crown Prince said.

"There can only be one sure

(Continued on page 5)

Syria's and Lebanon's talks with Israel continue despite wide gap

From Jordan Times Staff Reporters in Washington

ISRAELI'S talks with Syria and Lebanon appeared to be proceeding with hardly any interruption despite the wide gap that separates the parties on issues as fundamental as withdrawal from the occupied territories.

But the Syrians and Israelis differed in their assessment on how well their third day of talks ended even though they have agreed to reconvene negotiations Monday.

Head of the Syrian delegation Muwaffak Al Alal said after a three-hour meeting with the Israeli delegation that he had no progress to report and accused Israel of distorting the interpretation of U.N. Security Council Resolution 242, which demands Israeli withdrawal from the territories it occupied in the 1967 war, in return for peace.

"The (Israeli) interpretation of (242) is that they do not have to withdraw from the territories they occupied in 1967. And our interpretation is exactly the opposite," said Dr. Alal Thursday. "But the real difference is that we are not saying we want only our occupied territory back. We are saying we want peace... we are ready to fulfill both sides of the

equation but they want the fruits of peace... but they do not want to implement their part of the equation."

Head of the Israeli delegation to talks with Syria Yossi Ben Aharon characterised the mood of the talks as "businesslike" and said he was optimistic since there was an exchange of views and discussions on what was required in order to conclude a peace agreement.

"(The fact) that he is reciprocating in itself is hopefully a sign that we are making some progress," Mr. Ben Aharon said.

He said the Israeli side raised the issue of Syria's acceptance of the legitimacy and existence of Israel, as well as the issue of Syrian Jews.

Israeli delegation spokesman Benjamin Netanyahu reported Thursday afternoon that Israel's talks with the Syrians and Lebanese were probing deeper and deeper into our definition of peace. "But he laid out his own interpretation of what was meant by 242."

"I think there is a greater willingness to look at 242, if not in a completely new light, at least in a conditional light," Mr. Netanyahu said. "That's how I would put it, in a conditional fashion. And that is to think of its separate components perhaps as being tied in a conditional way that we don't accept, you can imagine. We think the separate elements are there anyway..."

The atmosphere during the Israeli-Syrian talks, he said, "was fairly businesslike except when we got to the point of Syrian Jews. Then it became very unbusinesslike, very unbusinesslike." He asserted that there was "a complete raising of the walls and unwillingness on the part of the Syrians to address the plight of this beleaguered community... they said it was an internal Syrian element."

He said Israel has decided to extend its stay in Washington until the middle of the week "in order to get substantive negotiations with the three Arab delegations in Washington before we go back home and make our report." He said the Israeli delegations had originally intended to go back to Israel Thursday.

(Continued on page 5)

Baker: No U.S. interference in internal Soviet affairs

WASHINGTON (Agencies) — Secretary of State James Baker said Friday the United States would not interfere in the internal domestic political turmoil now unfolding in the Soviet Union.

Addressing a White House press conference ahead of his trip to key Soviet republics, Mr. Baker said:

"We cannot and must not inject ourselves into this purely political process."

Mr. Baker said the "new Russian revolution... must come from within and not from outside."

Mr. Baker, at a news conference after meeting with President George Bush, said the president spoke by telephone on Friday with Russian President Boris Yeltsin who gave him a "full update" on efforts to form a new commonwealth to replace the Soviet Union.

"Events are moving quickly and dramatic decisions are being made as the republics sort out relations among themselves," and seek to form a common entity for national policy," Mr. Baker said.

Soviet President Mikhail Gorbachev said Friday he had no intention of stepping down immediately and would remain in power at least until next week's visit by Mr. Baker.

"He was asked whether he would remain until Monday for the secretary of state's visit and he said there was no doubt about that," spokesman Alexander Litkeval said of a meeting Mr. Gorbachev held with U.S. journalists.

"As for later, he said this was a matter of the constitutional process which will take some time. He mentioned no date for any possible resignation," Mr. Litkeval said by telephone from his Kremlin office.

Mr. Baker said he would travel to five cities in the Soviet republics for talks that would focus on the need for nuclear weapons control, humanitarian concerns and other issues.

"We cannot and we must not inject ourselves into this purely political process and, as the president made clear at the cabinet meeting, we will not so inject ourselves," Mr. Baker said.

He said U.S. officials "have not seen any changes in command and control that alarm us," but he added: "We do have a national security interest in seeing that these transformations take place in a manner that does not increase the risk from a nuclear standpoint."

Asked whether he views Mr. Gorbachev as "gone," Mr. Baker referred the questioner to Mr. Bush's statement earlier in the day that it was not "helpful" to be discussing the personalities of those involved in the power struggle in the old Soviet Union.

Mr. Baker stressed his determination to favour democratic-minded regions in his diplomacy, but the United States would not deny humanitarian assistance to other regions in the splintering nation.

The secretary of state said he would meet with Mr. Gorbachev. See related story on page 6.

Honecker sparks rows in Chile and Soviet Union

BERLIN (R) — Fugitive former East German leader Erich Honecker, ordered to leave Moscow by midnight, sparked political battles in Chile and the Soviet Union on Friday as he fought extradition face manslaughter charges in Germany.

Mr. Honecker, 79, on the run at home and abroad since he was swept out of office two years ago by popular protests, spent the day holed up in Chile's red-brick embassy in Moscow.

Half-way around the world, left-wing members of Chile's government pressed President Patricio Aylwin to grant asylum to the veteran communist as thanks for taking in refugees from the military dictatorship of the 1970s and 1980s.

But Santiago was waiting until Russian and Soviet leaders, locked in a tug-of-war over the unwanted guest, worked out what to do with the man Bonn wants to try for imposing a shoot-to-kill order at the Berlin Wall and German border.

Caught in the middle, Bonn called on both Santiago and Moscow to ensure that Mr. Honecker, who fled to the Soviet Union last March to escape trial here, is returned to Germany.

"I assume Mr. Honecker's stay in the Chilean embassy will not be long," German Justice Minister Klaus Kinkel said.

Mr. Honecker, whose headline rule from 1971 to 1989 prompted many East Germans to occupy embassies to win permission to travel West, slipped into San-

tiago's embassy in Moscow on Wednesday and asked to join his daughter in Chile.

His wife Margot visited the daughter, who is married to a Chilean communist, last October.

Mr. Honecker's dash to the Chilean mission left him ensnared in the protracted power struggle between Russian President Boris Yeltsin and the waning Soviet leader, Mikhail Gorbachev.

What may be Mr. Honecker's last stand also strained Mr. Aylwin's centre-left coalition in Santiago, where the Socialist Party wants to grant him entry while the president is loath to anger German Chancellor Helmut Kohl, a fellow Christian Democrat.

Russian Interior Minister Andrei Dumayev has said the issue could be resolved by midnight on Friday, the deadline for him to leave, but it was not clear whether he would be sent home or free to go to any country which would grant him asylum.

Chile has let Mr. Honecker remain temporarily at the residence of Ambassador Clodomiro Almeyda, a former Socialist Party president who lived in East German and Soviet exile after 1973.

German newspapers reported Mr. Almeyda, who as foreign minister in the leftist government of President Salvador Allende helped establish diplomatic ties with East Berlin, was refused exile in West Germany before he turned to the communist states.

Germany expects Honecker soon,

U.S. papers see Mideast sides trying to break impasse

Special from Washington

EVENTS OTHER than the Middle East peace negotiations continued to dominate news reports in the U.S. media Friday as American newspapers paid more attention to the talks than television and radio.

Friday's newspapers noted progress in Thursday's efforts to resolve the deadlock over how to negotiate separate Jordanian and Palestinian agendas, with all sides saying they were "edging closer" to breaking the impasse.

The Washington Times quoted Haidar Abdul Shafi as saying, "I think, it's my feeling, that we are approaching an agreement and that probably we'll proceed into substance very soon." The New York Times reported yesterday's events in the Silwan neighbourhood of Jerusalem, where Israeli settlers occupied Arab homes.

John Goshko of the Washington Post reported that the Israelis, Palestinians and Jordanians have all agreed on a two-track approach "whose practical effects would have Israel discuss issues involving Palestinians in the West Bank and Gaza Strip with the Palestinian members of the joint delegation." According to Goshko's sources, the compromise formula arrived at on Thursday calls for the Palestinians to drop their insistence on starting the talks in separate rooms, while the Israelis would agree to an early start on the two-track approach. This

Curfew causes severe hardships in West Bank

OCCUPIED JERUSALEM (Agencies) — Food and fuel shortages were reported in the occupied West Bank towns of Ramallah and Al Bireh because of a nearly two-week army curfew imposed after the death of a Jewish settler, human rights groups said Friday.

A coordinating committee for the groups said in a statement that "the residents are suffering food shortages and a lack of income" because they are not allowed to go to their jobs.

It said the curfew was "a collective penalty" and urged that it be lifted immediately.

Under a curfew, residents are confined to their homes 24 hours a day. All vehicles, including delivery trucks, are barred from the streets.

The army said the curfew was imposed on the towns in the West Bank to facilitate searches for suspects in the death of Jewish settler Zvi Klein, 45, who was fatally shot in the head Dec. 1 as he drove near Al Bireh.

An army spokesman said he could not say when the restrictions would be removed.

But Joshua Schoffman, legal director of the Association for Civil Rights in Israel, said his group had been assured that the army would lift the curfew Sunday "if nothing else happens."

He said that until the curfew was lifted, the civil rights group kept active a suit filed earlier this week "challenging this curfew as excessive."

The adjacent towns of Ramallah and Al Bireh, about 10 kilometres north of Jerusalem, are home to more than 50,000 Palestinians.

The curfew has been lifted for brief periods on five occasions to allow families to shop, the army said.

But residents of Ramallah, reached by telephone Friday, said

milk and heating oil were not available and bread was in short supply because of lack of deliveries under the curfew.

The residents, requesting anonymity out of fear, said that Jewish settlers had several times rampaged through the towns during the curfew, smashing windows and slashing tires in apparent revenge for Klein's death.

A similar curfew on villages and refugee camps surrounding Ramallah and Al Bireh was lifted Thursday after 12 days in force.

Sandro Tucci, spokesman for the U.N. agency handling aid to Palestinians, said an emergency food distribution was planned for the Jalazon refugee camp near Ramallah, with 6,000 residents.

"We face a very serious problem of food shortages in the homes," Mr. Tucci said.

The army frequently imposes curfews in the occupied West Bank and Gaza Strip. Human rights groups say that the practice is a collective punishment that violates international conventions.

A recent report by the Palestinian-run Jerusalem Media and Communications Centre estimated that Palestinians in the occupied territories have spent an average of 10 weeks under curfew during the four-year uprising.

Settlers leave one house

In another development, Israeli settlers were evicted from a house in Arab East Jerusalem Friday but others were allowed to stay in a house they occupied after forcing out its Palestinian residents.

Palestinian leader Faisal Al Hussein, visiting Arab families forced out by the settlers, said Arab negotiators in Washington, who had agreed to delay discussions of Jerusalem's status, now wanted them to start immediately (see page 2).

(Continued on page 4)

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Husseini: Jerusalem now at
the top of Palestinian agenda

OCCUPIED JERUSALEM (AP) — The Palestinians will raise the explosive issue of Jerusalem as the first item at Washington peace talks because of intensified Jewish settlement in the city's Arab districts, a Palestinian leader warned Friday.

The Americans had pressured the Palestinians to save debate over Jerusalem, the most sensitive issue of the Arab-Israeli conflict, until a later stage of the talks, years down the road.

"In the beginning, we accepted to deal with Jerusalem in a second phase of negotiations, but now it is our first priority," Faisal Husseini, an adviser to Palestinian peace negotiators, said Friday.

Raising Jerusalem now would further complicate the Washington talks since Israel insists the city's future cannot be discussed until much later.

Mr. Husseini spent the night with two Palestinian families in the Arab district of Silwan, where a day earlier 13 Jewish families moved into six homes after claiming they acquired control legally.

The settlers, who tried to take over homes in the district last October but were ousted by police, made their move this time under police protection after winning the government's backing and a ruling that their rental of the homes was legal.

But Arab residents of the district have brought suit claiming

the settlers move into two of the houses was illegal. Liberal politicians criticised the settlers' move and about 20 Israeli peace activists demonstrated Friday against the settlers.

The Israeli newspaper Haaretz reported Friday that other Jewish settler groups have been working secretly for the past year to acquire property in other Arab districts of Jerusalem.

Jerusalem's Israeli mayor, Teddy Kollek, warned that the settlers' actions threatened the peace talks and further raised tensions in the city.

He blamed the government which he said "seems to be following the extremists, people with a fanatically shortsighted understanding of Jerusalem's interests."

"Does anyone seriously think that there will not always be Muslims and Christians in Jerusalem? That we can ignore their rights and expect the world to respect ours?" he said Friday.

Mr. Kollek said, however, that he was helpless against the settlers. "Unfortunately, as mayor, I have no means to fight, other than my powers of persuasion," he said.

On Friday, a municipal court issued a temporary order telling the settlers to leave one house involved in the Arabs' suit but allowing them to remain in the other until a final decision on the case is made in three days.

On Thursday, the settlers had ignored a judges' instruction to leave both dwellings, and police did not move to evict them. Police spokesman Shmuel Ben-Ruby said police did not act because they had no specific order.

When the settlers first entered the Silwan homes on Oct. 9, police evicted the intruders on their own as a security threat. Silwan is a hotbed of the four-year Palestinian uprising, and police feared violent clashes.

But last Sunday, the right-wing cabinet of Prime Minister Yitzhak Shamir approved the settlers' move into the area — provided they got legal backing — and ordered police to protect them.

Dan Avi-Isaac, an attorney for the settlers, said most of the apartments were rented to the settlers by government agencies. For example, he said, one-third are "absentee property" taken over by the "occupation power" after Arab owners fled in the 1948 Middle East war.

On Friday, dozens of riot police were deployed to guard the Jewish settlers.

Mr. Husseini said the takeover of the Silwan home made it more difficult to sell the idea of the peace talks to sceptical Palestinians.

"Our people have their own serious doubts about the credibility of the peace talks," he said.

Kurds sceptical of
Saudi-backed Iraqi
exile 'government'

ERBIL, Iraq (R) — Kurdish rebels say Saudi Arabia has proposed that they join with other Iraqi opposition groups in forming a provisional government in exile with the aim of toppling President Saddam Hussein.

But the Kurds add they are sceptical of the plan, under which a Riyadh-based provisional government would request United Nations recognition as the legitimate government of Iraq.

"We are familiar with the Saudi plan. Apart from money, I am not sure what the Saudis have to offer. They have no political ideas," Hoshiyar Zebani, adviser to Massoud Barzani who is one of two major Kurdish resistance leaders, told Reuters Friday.

He and other Kurdish sources in northern Iraq said the Saudis were trying to organise a meeting of Iraqi opposition groups to be held in Riyadh early next year.

They said the governments of Egypt, Iran and Syria were cooperating with Saudi Arabia in trying to implement the plan.

More than 60 Iraqi opposition groups seek President Saddam's fall but ethnic, religious and ideological differences divide them.

Nationalist Kurds, Sunni Baathists, Shiite fundamentalists and Christian communists jostle for position. Kurds say forming a provisional government incorporating all groups is daunting.

Saudi Arabia — with a Gulf war score to settle with Iraq — brings money and regional influence to the table. It already supports several Iraqi opposition groups, but not the Kurds.

Mr. Zebani said he believed the Saudis hoped to replace President Saddam and his leadership with another Sunni-led government that would not be influenced by Syrian nationalists or Iranian fundamentalists.

"They want ... a palace coup really. They fear change from the periphery, from the Kurds or the Shiites," he said.



Massoud Barzani

Kurds strongly prefer a provisional government based in northern Iraq, saying it would be more likely to gain independence and international legitimacy.

Kurdish sources say the Saudi intelligence chief visited Washington in September to enlist U.S. support for the scheme.

There has been no official word from Saudi Arabia regarding any such proposal.

Washington, wary of Iraqi opposition groups, is said to be seeking a way to get toppling President Saddam without direct involvement.

"The New York Times reported earlier this week that the Bush administration was reviewing military operations for a U.S. response in the event of a coup in Iraq."

President George Bush, facing a reelection bid next year, expects political foes to point to President Saddam's continued rule as proof the Gulf war and U.S.-instigated United Nations blockade had failed to achieve a main goal.

Mr. Barzani, leader of the guerrilla-backed Kurdish Democratic Party (KDP), has been negotiating with Baghdad for months to secure autonomy for Kurdistan within the framework of a sovereign Iraqi state.

Donors
pledge
\$700m for
Lebanon's
rebuilding

PARIS (R) — International donors have pledged \$700 million towards the \$1.5 billion needed for urgent reconstruction work in Lebanon, the World Bank said Friday.

Caio Koch-Weser, World Bank vice-president with responsibility for the Middle East, told a news conference that the Lebanese economy was fundamentally sound — surprisingly so after 16 years of civil war and foreign invasion.

"Once confidence is built, there should be tremendous scope for attracting private equity into the country," he said.

In the meantime, aid was needed immediately to restore telecommunications, repair water, waste and electricity services and build houses for the 800,000 people — almost a quarter of the population — displaced by fighting.

Lebanese Prime Minister Omar Karame, his Finance Minister Ali Al Khali and other senior officials met delegates from 11 donor countries and 13 international agencies on Thursday.

The promised \$700 million of aid was split roughly evenly between the Arab and other states, but had mostly been pledged already at earlier bilateral meetings. Thursday's session was an effort to coordinate aid flows, Mr. Koch-Weser said.

Finance Minister Khalil told the news conference: "During the past two years we have been able to maintain peace and order, and we say that we have normal security due to the national reconciliation government."

"Military that have been in the country for 16 years won't go overnight. You can't just wave a magic wand and expect them to disappear," he said.

But the government was containing the problem and, as far as possible, integrating irregulars within state security forces.

'Maxwell died from mix of
heart attack and drowning'

SANTA CRUZ DE TENERIFE, Spain (Agencies) — British media tycoon Robert Maxwell probably died of a heart attack although drowning could not be ruled out as an associated factor, according to a final forensic report released Friday.

Judge Isabel Oliva of the Granadilla district court, who issued the report, said she had decided to close the case after concluding that Mr. Maxwell's death was most probably accidental.

The family or a higher provincial court has 10 days to appeal, Judge Oliva said.

"I've closed the case," she said. Asked if she had found evidence of criminal activity, she answered: "No."

Earlier, court spokesman Jose Luis Santos had said Judge Oliva had issued a formal ruling to shelve the case without charges.

"She believes she has nothing more to do," Mr. Santos said.

"From her point of view, there are no known individuals implicated."

The judge based her decision on police investigations, her questioning of the crew and Mr. Maxwell's widow, and an autopsy report that concluded Mr. Maxwell died due to a coronary crisis.

Initial forensic findings indicated that Mr. Maxwell, 68, died of a heart attack but speculation has been rife he might have committed suicide or been killed as his media empire crumbled.

The report said he died within an hour either side of 0600 GMT on Nov. 5.

The effects of water on the body were consistent with the time between his death and the time the body was recovered from the sea (about 1840 GMT).

"No external signs of violence were found, nor specifically any punctures, injuries indicating blockage of respiratory orifices,

or traumatism which would imply loss of consciousness or a definitive mortal action."

"Evidence of death caused by a toxic agent was not confirmed by analysis conducted so far," the report said.

The widow of Mr. Maxwell is happy with the findings of the autopsy and with the judge's recommendation the case be closed, the family's lawyer said.

"I have just spoken to Mrs. Maxwell and she was reassured by the result," Julio Hernandez Claverie told Reuters Thursday.

Mr. Hernandez Claverie declined to speculate on how the judge's decision would affect the family's insurance companies payouts, estimated at £20 million (\$36 million).

"It will be up to the (insurance companies') lawyers to see whether they accept the decision," he said.

Speculation Mr. Maxwell killed himself to avoid the humiliation of seeing his publishing empire collapse has been mounting since he died. His empire, his wife collapsed under debts of \$3 billion.

In Britain, fraud squad detectives are investigating suspicion that as creditors turned up the heat in the months before Mr. Maxwell's death, the Czech-born mogul desperately siphoned off pension fund assets worth around \$600 million.

Mr. Hernandez Claverie said the family had no immediate plans to challenge the judge's ruling, but stressed they would only decide after careful reading of the autopsy report and the judge's decision, more than 50 pages in total.

"There are many medical concepts which I don't understand very well. It's very long. It will take me several days," he said.

MIDDLE EAST NEWS IN BRIEF

Vassiliou gives guarantees for Turks

CANBERRA (AP) — Greek Cypriot President George Vassiliou Friday advocated establishing a unified federal state in which Greek and Turkish Cypriots would be protected by having their own police forces, mayors and legal systems. Vassiliou, who is on a week-long official visit to Australia, met Prime Minister Bob Hawke on Thursday and received a pledge for continued Australian support for U.N. efforts to reunify the island. As Turkish Cypriots demonstrated outside, Mr. Vassiliou told the National Press club Friday that the United Nations and the world community should work to force Turkey to withdraw its occupation forces from northern Cyprus.

Army to cede power in Mauritania by end of 1992

NOUAKCHOTT (R) — Mauritania's President Maouiya Ould Sid'Ahmed Taya has said his military government will cede power to elected civilians by the end of 1992, apparently ending the takeover by several months. Thursday's announcement on state radio made no reference to a previous timetable under which the army would give up power in the first half of next year. The country's eight opposition parties recently asked the government to delay presidential elections, scheduled for Jan. 24, by three of four months to give them more time to prepare. Political analysts said Colonel Ould Taya's announcement could be a response to their request, hinting at a possible postponement. Col. Ould Taya is one of two candidates who have so far said they will run for president.

Relatives of jailed dissidents protest in Iran

NICOSIA (R) — Iranian police arrested several relatives of political dissidents protesting outside offices of the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) in Tehran on Thursday, an Iraq-based opposition group said. The protesters accused authorities of sending political prisoners to secret prisons in an effort to hide them from ICRC inspection, the Mujahadeen-e-Khalq group said in a statement from London. Iran, accused by the West of human rights violations, agreed last month to let the ICRC visit prisons and interview inmates. Tehran denies detaining people for their political beliefs. The Mujahadeen said police tried to stop protesters from reaching the ICRC office and detained a "large number" of them.

Lockerbie victim's father meets with Qadhafi

LONDON (R) — The father of a victim of the 1988 bombing of a Pan Am jet said on Thursday he had a secret meeting with Libyan leader Muammar Qadhafi and was given a sealed envelope for Scotland's top law officer, Jim Swire, whose daughter was killed in the explosion over the Scottish town of Lockerbie, said he had handed the envelope to Scotland's lord advocate Wednesday. "I think I know what it contains but I am not saying," Mr. Swire said.

JORDAN TIMES DAILY GUIDE AND CALENDAR

JORDAN TELEVISION

Tel: 773111-19

PROGRAMME TWO

18:00 Le Châtelier de Labrycinthe

18:30 Les Chavellers du Ciel

19:00 News in French

19:15 Documentary

19:30 News in Hebrew

20:00 News in Arabic

20:30 Totally Hidden VI

21:00 Economist

21:30 Life on the Land

22:00 News in English

22:30 Feature film "D.A."

PRAYER TIMES

06:54 Fajr

06:16 (Sunrise) Dhuhr

12:26 'Asr

16:26 Maghreb

17:58 'Isha

CHURCHES

St. Mary of Nazareth Church Swellish, Tel. 870740

Assumption of Gop Church, Tel. 823785

St. Joseph Church Tel. 624590

Church of the Annunciation Tel. 637440

De la Salle Church Tel. 661757

Terrace Church Tel. 622566

Church of the Annunciation Tel. 623541

Anglican Church Tel. 623383, Tel. 628543

Armenian Catholic Church Tel. 771331

Armenian Orthodox Church Tel. 772561

St. Ephraim Church Tel. 771751

Armenian International Church Tel. 683326

Evangelical Lutheran Church Tel. 811255

The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints Tel. 623824, 654932

Church of Nazareth Tel. 675691

WEATHER

Bulletin supplied by the Department of Meteorology.

The effect of the cold front will decrease gradually on Saturday. Though it will remain partly cloudy and relatively cold. Winds will be mostly cloudy and winds will be southerly moderate and seas calm.

Min./Max. temp.
Amman 5 / 10

USEFUL TELEPHONE
NUMBERS
NIGHT DUTY

AMMAN:

Dr. Hassan Mansour 748344

Dr. Khaled Hakeem 733222

Dr. Mohamed Nahravi 692925

Dr. Tewfik Qab'is 623028

First pharmacy 619112

Parsons pharmacy 778335

Al Aqsa pharmacy 637055

Natrouth pharmacy 623672

Al Salama pharmacy 636730

Yacoub pharmacy 644945

Shamekani pharmacy 637660

ERBIL:

Dr. Mohammed Al Zahrani (-)

Al Sharra' pharmacy (273825)

ZARQA:

Dr. Faisal Mideh (-)

Khalil pharmacy 985417

EMERGENCIES

Food Control Centre 637111

Civil Defence Department 661111

Civil Defence Immediate 630441

Railway 199

Civil Defence Emergency 199

Rescue Police 192, 621111, 637777

Fire Brigade 851228

Blood Bank 771211

Highway Police 843402

Traffic Police 896390

Public Security Department 630321

Hotel Complaints 608810

Price Complaints 661176

Water and Sewerage 897467

Amman Municipality 787111

Complaints 787111

Telephone Information (directory assistance) 121

Overseas Calls 010238

Central Amman Telephone

Repairs 623101

Abdali Telephone Repairs 611011

Jordan Television 773111

Radio Jordan 774111

Water Authority 680100

Jordan Electricity Authority 615615

Electric Power

Company 636381

RJ Flight Information 08-53200

Queen Alia Int. Airport 08-33200

HOSPITALS

AMMAN:

Hussein Medical Centre 813813/32

Khalil Maternity, J. Amn. 642816

Al-Khalil Maternity, J. Amn. 642412

Jabal Amman Maternity 642362

Malhas, J. Amman 636140

Palestine Specialist 6641714

Samirani Hospital 669131

University Hospital 645845

Al-Mushtaq Hospital 667227/9

The Islamic, Abdali 666121/57

Al-Ahli, Abdali 666144/6

Italian, Al-Majidi 777101/3

Al-Bashir, J. Asfarieh 775111/26

Army, Marza 891611/15

Queen Alia Hospital 602240/50

Amal Hospital 674155

Zarqa Govt. Hospital (09)983323

Zarqa National Hospital (09)900560

Ibn Sina Hospital (09)986732

Al Hikma Modern Hospital (09)99890

ERBIL:

Princess Basma Hospital (02)225555

Greek Catholic Hospital (02)222775

Ibn Al Nafos Hospital (02)247100

AQABA:

Princess Haya Hospital (03)314111

FOR THE TRAVELLER
QUEEN ALIA
INTERNATIONAL
AIRPORT

This information is supplied by Royal Jordanian (RJ) information department at the Queen Alia International Airport Tel. (08)5228-5, where it should always be verified.

ARRIVALS

Royal Jordanian (RJ) Flights
(Terminal 1)

9:00 Damascus (RJ)

9:30 Dhahran (RJ)

9:45 Cairo (RJ)

9:45 New Delhi (RJ)

9:45 Kuwait, Dubai (RJ)

10:20 Colombo (RJ)

10:30 Beirut (RJ)

10:30 London (RJ)

10:30 Frankfurt, Vienna (RJ)

10:30 Tripoli (RJ)

10:30 Helsinki, Aqaba (RJ)

Other Flights (Terminal 2)

12:00 Saman (TY)

20:15 Rome, Beirut (AZ)

Other Flights (Terminal 2)

06:30 Paris (AF)

06:15 Beirut (AT)

13:00 Saman (TY)

MARKET PRICES

Upper/lower price in fill per kg.

Apple 600 / 50

Banana 300 / 40

Banana (Mekamun) 300 / 30

Beans 650 / 60

Cabbage 100 / 120

Cauliflower 220 / 20

Cauliflower (large) 180 / 150

Cucumbers (small) 300 / 30

Eggplant 280 / 20

Garlic 200 / 150

Onion 200 / 150

Onion (dry) 180 / 120

Pepper (hot) 320 / 20

Pepper (sweet) 450 / 30

Potato 300 / 250

Sage 600 / 50

Spinach 220 / 180

Sweet melon 240 / 20

Tomatoes 600 / 30

Watermelon 160 / 15

Handwritten note: 05.1.1991

Foreign minister returns from Dakar

AMMAN (Petra) — Foreign Minister Kamel Abu Jaber and the Jordanian delegation accompanying him Thursday returned home after attending the Organisation of Islamic Conference's meetings which concluded in the Senegalese capital of Dakar Wednesday.

In an arrival statement, Dr. Abu Jaber said the Dakar summit reaffirmed the Islamic countries' support for the Arab rights and the constructive Arab position towards the peace process. He added that the summit renewed solidarity with the Palestinian people and voiced support for them in their endeavours to their legitimate rights.

The delegations taking part in the meetings expressed satisfaction with the peaceful efforts and delineated the elements for achieving a just, comprehensive and durable solution to the Middle East problem. Dr. Abu Jaber said, adding that Israeli withdrawal from the occupied Arab territories, including the occupied Jordanian territory, and ensuring the legitimate rights of the Palestinian people, were prerequisites for establishing a just and durable peace in the region.

He pointed out that His Majesty King Hussein's participation in the summit, was received with appreciation and satisfaction by the delegations taking part in the conference.

King Hussein's speech before the summit was well received and enjoyed the full support of participating delegations because of the specific ideas the King presented to ensure an Islamic renaissance, capable of lifting the Arab Nation out of the current deteriorating situation. Dr. Abu Jaber said.

The foreign minister pointed out that the King also emphasised the need for drawing up a future plan, including an Islamic perspective for remedying the problems facing Islamic countries.

Dr. Abu Jaber noted that the Jordanian delegation called on the conference to adopt a firm stand towards the repeated Israeli aggressions and attacks on the holy shrine in Jerusalem, following the recent attack on the Al Aqsa Mosque.

Ulama decry Israeli attack on Al Aqsa Mosque, urge U.S. to stop atrocities

AMMAN (Petra) — Jordan has formally asked the U.S. to help stop Israeli atrocities in the occupied Arab territories. The call was made by Awqaf and Islamic Affairs Minister Izzeddin Al Khadib to U.S. ambassador to Jordan, Roger Harrison, in a meeting Thursday.

Sheikh Khatib affirmed that the Israeli occupation authorities' aggressions on Arab and Islamic holy places were provocative acts that might lead to clashes in Al Aqsa Mosque and were considered as interference in the religious affairs of the Muslim population of the territories.

Israeli forces Wednesday attacked Al Aqsa Mosque and installed eight loudspeakers on its western wall. The mosque is the third holiest shrine for Muslims everywhere.

Sheikh Khatib told the ambassador that such acts showed that Israel should not be supervising holy places for Muslims and Christians alike, and affirmed that every corner and every stone in the holy city has its historical importance for Arab citizens in the city and everywhere in the occupied territories.

The Israeli act, the minister added, was a flagrant challenge for the feelings of millions of Muslims around the world, particularly the Palestinian people.

Sheikh Khatib called on the American government to pressure Israel to stop such aggressions.

In a related development Chief Islamic Judge Mobammad Mheilan issued a statement Thursday condemning the Israeli aggression.

Sheikh Mheilan appealed to the Arab World, the Islamic world and all international organisations to bring to an end such atrocities and called on them to take rapid measures that would stop such acts by the occupation forces.

"With this ugly deed, Israel has added another crime to its daily crimes of killing innocent children and women in the West Bank and Gaza Strip, destroying houses, expropriating properties, uprooting trees and imprisoning men and women under fabricated charges," the statement said.

The Islamic Committee and the Awqaf and the Islamic Affairs Council in Jerusalem held a meeting Wednesday and demanded that Arab and Muslim states take action to reverse the effects of this aggression.

The Jordanian government has also asked Jordan's permanent representative at the United Nations to submit a memorandum on the issue to the Security Council and the general secretariat of the U.N.

Lower House lashes out at Dakar resolution to continue sanctions on Iraq

AMMAN (J.T.) — Jordan has strongly condemned a resolution taken by the Islamic summit conference in Dakar, Senegal calling for the continued imposition of international sanctions on Iraq.

A statement issued by the Lower House of Parliament said such a call was unjust and in contradiction to all norms and international principles and was directed against values of human rights and dignity.

"We are dismayed at the resolution calling for continued sanctions on the Iraqi people and we are urging Islamic nations to rescind such a resolution as history can never condone such crimes committed against a Muslim country by Muslims," said the statement issued on Thursday.

"Such a resolution runs against all norms, international principles, culture and faiths and runs counter to the teachings of Islam," added the statement.

We, the representatives of the Jordanian people, express total support for the Iraqi people, who are showing sacrifices and steadfastness in the face of hardships, and who deserve support from the leaders of the Islamic Nation," the statement continued.

"The heads of Islamic countries ought to take an honourable stand and seek the lifting of the sanctions rather than ask for their perpetuation."

The House statement urged heads of Islamic countries not to serve as tools in the hands of the camp, led by the United States, that is hostile against the Arab and Islamic countries.

The House sent copies of the statement to the Arab Parliamentary Union and the general secretariat of the Organisation of Islamic Conference (OIC) which organised the Dakar meeting.

Meanwhile, the Lower House said it was scheduled to hold a meeting Sunday to discuss the new government's policy statement and take a vote of confidence in the new government.

The Upper House of Parliament held a meeting Thursday, in the presence of Prime Minister Sharif Zeid Ben Shaker and cabinet members, during which two deputy speakers and two assistants to the speaker, Mr. Ahmad Al Lawzi were elected.

The Upper House also elected heads and members of the legal, financial, foreign relations, education and social affairs committees.

Panel enlightens Jordanians on Arab lobbies overseas

By Nur Sati
Special to the Jordan Times

AMMAN — Throughout the years, Arab lobbies in the United States and other areas have become the umbilical cord of the Arab World in keeping the legitimate interests of their motherland alive.

"We are working towards a better foreign policy in the United States and working towards the interests of the Middle East," Albert Mukheiber, president of the U.S.-based American-Arab Anti Discrimination Committee (ADC) said in a panel discussion Wednesday evening.

The focus of the panel discussion, entitled "Search for peace and justice," was mainly to enlighten the Jordanian public on the achievements of Arab lobbies abroad.

"We also need the people's support in the Arab countries and for them to know that they are not alone," Mr. Mukheiber told Radin Jordan.

The four speakers at the panel were Dr. Hassan Badran and Dr. Mahmoud Al Taher, members of the Jordanian Physicians for the Protection of Nuclear War (JPPNW) in addition Mr. Mukheiber and Mr. Eddie Zanzani who is secretary-general of the (Australian-based) Committee of Arab-Australians (CAA).

Speaking to Radio Jordan, Mr. Mukheiber said that the ADC was growing in strength although it was not as strong as the Israeli lobby. "It is important to note," he said, "that ADC is not limited to Arab-Americans but includes also the majority of the American people."

Looking into the issue of the \$10 billion loan guarantee to Israel, Mr. Mukheiber said at the panel that because of the recession the United States is passing through, "Congress will have to walk all over the increasing numbers of homeless to pass the guarantee. The American people will oppose that."

In relation to the loan guarantee, ADC is challenging the U.S. administration to charge Israel on the \$20 billion worth of damage in the Beirut University bombing, last month. "Since the suspects have already admitted they were working with Israel, we sent letters to the U.S. administration

that the cost of the damage should be paid for by the U.S. and (U.S.) should debit the loan guarantee to Israel," Mr. Mukheiber said.

Asked about ADC's activities to counter the moves by the U.N. to repeal that Zionism equals racism, Mr. Mukheiber said: "It is only a resolution. Just because the United Nations says that Zionism is not racism it does not mean it is true. What Israel aims at is for us (Arabs) to concentrate on this issue so we do not look after more important issues. It is their form of distracting us."

Representative of the CAA, Mr. Zanzani, focused on the important role the Arab community (in Australia) has on the Asian Pacific basin as well as its adjacent and neighbouring countries.

Arabs, who total 300,000 out of the 17 million Australian population, number higher in Australia than in the United States, he said. Here too "the Israeli lobby is extremely powerful and has an impact in stereotyping Arabs and Islam," Mr. Zanzani, who is also an architect said. "There is a lot of discrimination," he went on to say.

"If the government is the main educator of public opinion, then people are influenced by their governments and base their stands on the official government line," he said, adding that Arab organisations are looking into the process of transcending regionalism and sectarianism and are fighting discrimination in the community.

CAA was formed on Aug. 10, 1990 during the Gulf crisis.

"We are trying to change political resolutions that have affected the Arab community which were looked upon as second class citizens," Mr. Zanzani said.

Throughout the 100 years of history in the Labour Party, no parliament member voted against the government without getting kicked out, he said. "Now, eight people from the Labour Party voted against the government yet we were able to afford them enough protection from getting kicked out."

According to Mr. Zanzani, it was a turning point for the Arab community, Australians began to realise that Arabs were a part of Australia and had the right to oppose government policies.

Dr. Badran spoke about the activities of the JPPNW, which was formed by a group of international doctors in 1980, to educate the public on the consequences of nuclear war. During the Gulf war the JPPNW campaigned vigorously in Jordan and abroad.

Dr. Taher told the audience: "Iraqi and Palestinian children in Ottawa, Canada, have met the foreign affairs deputies and the Canadian government to demand the unfreezing of Iraq's assets."

His Majesty King Hussein met at the Royal Court with Mr. Mukheiber, Mr. Rahhal and former Senate member James Abu Rizek. The King spoke about the peace process and Jordan's view and he (King) was briefed on the groups activities and programmes.

ESCWA opens Gulf returnees file on Monday

AMMAN (J.T.) — His Royal Highness Crown Prince Hassan will patronise Monday the meeting which the United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia (ESCWA) will organise in order to examine the ways and means of absorbing the large number of returnees from the Gulf countries and to find solutions to the unemployed skilled labour in the ESCWA countries.

Integrating the skilled expatriate workers in the ESCWA region with a particular emphasis on the opportunities and openings in the industrial sector is one of the main objectives of the expert group meeting that will be held in the ESCWA headquarters in Amman. An additional focus will be put on other related issues such as the identification of activities to be implemented by national, regional and international organisations as well as the possibilities of helping the ESCWA countries to enhance the absorption of the returnees.

The two-day meeting will take place in the context of the severity of the situation caused by the sudden and unplanned flow back of relatively huge number of jobless migrant workers causing a sharp escalation of unemployment in labour sending countries. Most of these countries were already suffering from the heavy effect of the earlier returnees coming back from the Gulf countries (as a result of the prevailing recession there), or from Iraq (as a result of the end of the Iraq/Iran war), or from the impact of the structural adjustment programmes.

With the outbreak of the Gulf crisis an estimated two million migrant workers and their dependents went back to Egypt (700,000), Jordan and the occupied Palestinian territories (350,000), Lebanon (60,000), Syria (110,000) and Yemen (880,000), causing severe economic and social implications in home countries, especially that they represent a significant percentage of the economically active population.

Many of the returnees are skilled labour, possessing managerial, administrative and technical skills. Furthermore, a part of them could be potential small and medium industrial entrepreneurs, and their accumulated saving balance can be potential sources of finance for new ventures particularly in industry.

Due to the pressing issue of the returnees, ESCWA is holding this expert group meeting in preparation for more action-oriented ESCWA activities, including a more comprehensive meeting, that will be undertaken within the framework of ESCWA region, during 1992-1993, and will be dealing with the impact of labour movement in both labour sending and labour receiving countries.

A number of experts will participate in this meeting representing ESCWA member countries and regional and international organisations.

Experts propose important steps to upgrade farming

AMMAN (J.T.) — A three-day meeting organised by the Arab Farmers Cooperatives Federation ended in Amman Thursday with a call on Arab countries to facilitate the flow of agricultural products among themselves to ensure food security in the Arab World.

The theme of the meeting was the role of farmers cooperatives in promoting food production in the Arab World and the experience of the Jordan Cooperative Organisation was among those topics discussed at the meeting.

A statement at the end of the conference urged the participating countries to pave the way for more investments in agriculture to use modern technology for the sake of ensuring food security and to give special attention to the development of the rural regions of the Arab World.

The statement recommended also that Arab agricultural cooperatives be allowed to boost their operations as they form a very essential element in promoting production, and to give proper vocational training to personnel involved in the work of agricultural extension services.

The statement called on countries of the region to give due protection to the land from pollution, to conduct studies and seminars in pollution-prevention matters and to offer guidance to farmers on the proper use of chemical materials like pesticides with a view to safeguarding the land and the environment in general.

It also said that special emphasis in the national strategies should be made on the production of cereals and animal feed which are essential components in the plans and programmes for ensuring food security.

Other recommendations included calls for protecting pasture lands, introducing measures to stem desertification, forestry programmes, storage of cereals, food processing operations and the marketing of agricultural products.

Also ending in Amman Thursday was a five-day conference organised by Near East regional office of the U.N. Food and Agriculture Organisation (FAO) with the participation of delegates from 24 countries.

According to Dr. Hani Haddadin who chaired the sessions, the meeting passed resolutions calling on Near Eastern countries to step up efforts towards increasing seed production, combating pests, and promptly dealing with diseases common to man and animal.

Dr. Haddadin told the Jordan News Agency, Petra, that the participants recommended programmes to spread awareness among the consumers and the producers of crops about food products, and urged continued exchanges of expertise in matters related to testing of imported seeds, combating pests, growing products under plastic cover and other related matters.

The delegates, he said, also recommended closer cooperation among the Near Eastern nations in matters related to veterinary medicine, laboratory work related to vaccines and combating animal diseases.

AMMAN (J.T.) — Royal Jordanian (RJ) Executive President Husam Abu Ghazaleh has resigned and is expected to be appointed ambassador to the foreign ministry, according to informed government sources here.

Mr. Abu Ghazaleh is to be succeeded to the post by Mahmoud Jamal Balqez, the director-general of the Civil Aviation Authority (CAA), according to the source which preferred anonymity.

Mr. Balqez, who earlier served as director general of the national airline, will be succeeded in his present post by Ahmad Jweib, the director-general of the Queen Alia International Airport.

Due to the changes, a press conference scheduled for Saturday by RJ's executive president to mark RJ's 28th anniversary has been cancelled, according to the sources.

They said the annual marketing and sales conference for RJ area managers which was supposed to open Monday, Dec. 16, has been postponed until further notice.

The two-day meeting was set to group area officers from 42 regions to conduct a reassessment of RJ's commercial performance and operations in 1991 and discuss operational plans for the coming year.

RJ's deputy directors were also to present the air carrier's policies about future operations, finance and administration at the meeting.

RJ's 1991 operations witnessed the reopening of the Amman-Beirut route and the starting of Amman-Colombo and Amman-Toronto new routes.

RJ chief resigns

QAF displays talents

AMMAN (J.T.) — The first ever exhibition of products by the Queen Alia Social Welfare Fund (QAF) is now being held at the Jordan Inter Continental Hotel in Amman.

The five-day exhibition which displays products by QAF's various centres was Thursday opened formally by Her Royal Highness Princess Basma, chairperson of QAF's Board of trustees.

On display are ceramic works,

bandwoven carpets and knit wear.

QAF runs a great number of centres, in rural and urban districts, designed to raise the standard of Jordanian families and help women in rural areas to contribute to the development of their community.

QAF, which was founded to promote, consolidate and organise national capabilities and resources in support of social development and a higher life quality for Jordanian people, now runs community development centres, centres for the disabled, voluntary social work, child care programmes, skills development programmes for women, and rehabilitation training programmes especially in the rural regions.

Several cabinet members and members of the foreign diplomatic community in Amman were present among the audience of invited guests at the opening ceremony.

Choir of YWCA ushers Christmas

By Jean-Claude Elias
Special to the Jordan Times

AMMAN — Faithful to their annual Christmas "rendez-vous" with all lovers of vocal music, the Young Woman Christian Association (YWCA) choir has started a series of four concerts, virtually all sold out several days in advance, at Nabil Mashim theatre (ex Noujoum, ex Opera). Performances started Dec. 13 and would continue at 8:00 pm today and tomorrow.

With a participation of about 50 singers and pianists Samia Gbannom and Leonardo Guilgail, the YWCA choir has this year added Ramzi Qubein on violin and Fares Jalalini on clarinet who will perform on Mozart's laudate dominum.

Over the past years, the choir has been known not only to deliver a high quality performance but to also add the unique and essential Christmas spirit to their singing. This year's programme can be divided into three distinct parts: A medley of Christmas carols in which the audience is nicely asked to participate and sing with the choir, classical pieces selected from the sacred repertoire and masses by Mozart and finally a full cantata by John Peterson.

While all members have put all their talent and faith in preparing the much awaited series of concerts, it is worth mentioning the special efforts of conductor Karim Bawab whose dedication and genuine spirit are beyond compare, as well as the work of soloists Randa Awad, Samia Gbannom, Samir Carmi and Ramzi Bassil.

In addition to the main adult choir, the YWCA children's choir will present "Twinkling Star," "In A Manger" and "Chante Dans La Rue."

The YWCA will bring the freshness and pure beauty of vocal art to a season exceptionally rich in instrumental concerts.

امانة عمان الكبرى
اعلان طرح عطاء ٩١ / ١
توريد البليت ومعدات صيانة الطرق

تعلن امانة عمان الكبرى عن رغبتها في طرح عطاء البليت ومعدات واجهزة صيانة الطرق شاملة لتوريد اوردات مداحل، تركوتوات، بليت، جهاز رشاش اسفلت، فريدة حصى كبيرة، اجهزة فحص، ونش على سيارة، فينشر صفيح، واقلاع حبلية.

يمكن الحصول على وثائق العطاء للشركات ذات الاختصاص مقابل مبلغ ١٦٠٠ دينار غير مستردة عن كل نسخة وذلك من دائرة العطاءات في امانة عمان الكبرى مصطحبين معهم رخصة من سارية المفعول (صورة واصل) وذلك اعتباراً من ١٩٩١/١٢/١١ وعلى جميع المتقدمين الالتزام بتعبئة جدول الاسعار التفصيلي الموجود بوثيقة دعوة العطاء على الصفحة رقم ٣٩ كما هو مطلوب وكل عرض يرد مخالفا لهذا الشرط سوف يهمل ولا ينتظر به.

آخر موعد لتقديم العروض هو الساعة العاشرة من صباح يوم الاثنين الموافق ١٩٩١/١٢/٢٧ مرفق بطلبين مقداره ٥ ٪ من قيمة العرض بموجب كفاية بنكية وكل عرض غير مرفق بالطلبين المطلوب يرفض ولا ينتظر به. تفتح المظاريف بنفس اليوم الساعة الثانية عشرة ظهراً وبجساسة علنية.

Municipality of Greater Amman
Amman Transport and Municipal Development Project
(Loan No. 2334 - JO)

Road Maintenance Equipment and Instruments Tender I/FB 1/91

The Municipality of Greater Amman intends to apply part of the proceeds of the above mentioned loan for the new issue of road maintenance equipment and instruments tender which includes the following: loaders, pneumatic rollers, tractors, pickup trucks, portable spray bar, portable chip spread, TRRL skid resistance pendulum, sandpetch, truck mounted crane, mini finisher and traffic cones.

Tender documents will be available as of December 11, 1991 for a non-refundable fee of (JD 160) one hundred sixty JD for each set from:

Municipality of Greater Amman
Tenders Department
P.O.Box 132 Amman - Jordan
Tlx: 21969 AMCITY JO Fax: 649420

Closing date for accepting the bids is 10:00 hours January 27, 1992, at the same address mentioned above.

A bank guarantee as a bid bond is a must for accepting the bids amounting to (5%) of the total bid value and all bidders must comply fully with page (39) of the tenders documents in order for their bids to be accepted.

All bids will be opened publicly on the same closing date at 12:00 hours.

امانة عمان الكبرى
اعلان اعادة طرح عطاء ٩٠ / ٢
توريد البليت ومعدات صيانة الطرق

تعلن امانة عمان الكبرى عن رغبتها باعادة طرح عطاء البليت ومعدات صيانة الطرق شاملة لتوريد تكتات مياه، قلابات صغيرة وكبيرة، مداحلة رجايلة، آلة قشط الاسفلت، تكت تزويد محروقات رجايلة باطون لودرات صفيحة، مقصات اسفلت وخرسانية، خلاطة باطون متحركة، مكبوكولور رشاش اسفلت وغلاية، مكنة تحبلة فواصل، مكنة تخطيط شوارع، ناقلة وفريدة اسفلت سائل.

يمكن الحصول على وثائق العطاء للشركات ذات الاختصاص مقابل مبلغ ١٦٠٠ دينار غير مستردة عن كل نسخة وذلك من دائرة العطاءات في امانة عمان الكبرى مصطحبين معهم رخصة من سارية المفعول (صورة واصل) اما الشركات التي سبق وان تقدمت لهذا العطاء فيمكنها الحصول على نسخة من الوثائق بالجان وذلك اعتباراً من ١٩٩١/١٢/١١ وعلى جميع المتقدمين الالتزام بتعبئة جدول الاسعار التفصيلي الموجود بوثيقة دعوة العطاء على الصفحة رقم ٣٩ كما هو مطلوب وكل عرض يرد مخالفا لهذا الشرط سوف يهمل ولا ينتظر به.

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Municipality of Greater Amman
Amman Transport and Municipal Development Project
(Loan No. 2334 - JO)

Reissue of Road Maintenance Equipment Tender I/FB 2/90

The Municipality of Greater Amman intends to apply part of the proceeds of the above mentioned loan for the reissue of road maintenance equipment tender which includes the following: water tanks, dump trucks small & large, vibratory rollers, road milling machine, fuel tank, concrete vibrators, mini loaders, cutting machines, mobile concrete mixer, backhoe loader, heater and sprayer, crack filling machine, melter pourer, road marking machine, bitumen distributor & tanker.

Tender documents will be available as of December 11, 1991 for a non-refundable fee of (JD 160) one hundred sixty JD for each set from:

Municipality of Greater Amman
Tenders Department
P.O.Box 132 Amman - Jordan
Tlx: 21969 AMCITY JO Fax: 649420

Companies that participated in above mentioned tender can obtain the tender documents at no fee.

Closing date for accepting the bids is 10:00 hours January 27, 1992, at the same address mentioned above.

A bank guarantee as a bid bond is a must for accepting the bids amounting to (5%) of the total bid value and all bidders must comply fully with page (39) of the tenders documents in order for their bids to be accepted.

All bids will be opened publicly on the same closing date at 12:00 hours.

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Time to reflect

THIS WEEKEND in Washington should serve in addition to being a time for rest as a time for reflection as well.

Arabs, Israelis and Americans, involved in the search for peace in this troubled region, should not let the vision of peace escape their sight when they weigh with care and alarm the prospects of peace or no peace in this part of the world. While Arabs should recall in their minds the fears of Israel, the Israelis should in turn dwell in their thoughts on Palestinian aspirations and rights. And the Americans should think in historical perception of their moral role as the dominant power in the world.

For peace to be achieved, those women and men in Washington should do their utmost to ensure that ultimately Israeli fears will be eradicated and Arab-Palestinian rights restored. Even at this very early stage of the negotiations both Arabs and Israelis could, by continuing to talk, do a great deal for removing mistrust between them and for replacing that with confidence.

Keeping in mind at all times what the alternative for peace will be, the negotiating sides in Washington should do all they could to ensure that the talks will proceed on solid and moral grounds. While it is regarded as naive to talk about morality in politics, this particular conflict in the Middle East requires a great deal of moral courage to untangle its complexity. Nowhere is a one land being claimed by two people and nowhere is the U.S. so involved.

The news coming from Washington late Friday were encouraging. Whatever shape of agreement the Jordanian, Palestinian and Israeli negotiators reach is for sure better than no agreement. An agreement on this issue paves the road for the next round and the one after. It is encouraging also to note that the Americans, although assuming a low key profile, are actively involved in the two sides quest for compromise. Although the U.S. administration is strained by its domestic agenda, the United States itself has a moral responsibility towards a world that it helped shape and a region — the Middle East — in which it has its most important interest. A region so important to American interests that the U.S. went into war against one of its regional powers.

Those negotiators in Washington must not only look at their task from the narrow framework of real politics but also in a historical perspective. Whatever they achieve or fail to achieve in Washington these days will help determine which path the peoples of the region will take, peace or war.

Those negotiators, therefore, should make their first agreement on continuing the talks no matter what obstacles they might face. They should work hard, together with their American interlocutors, to ensure that the talks will continue until peace is attained. This last opportunity must not be missed.

ARABIC PRESS COMMENTARIES

THE ARAB heads of state have missed a golden chance of meeting together and end their difference by failing to show up at the Islamic summit conference in Senegal, said Al Ra'i Arabic daily. The summit should have been a starting point for the heads of the Arab nation to launch joint action and to forget about their side differences for the sake of giving all their attention to achieve the aspirations of their nation, the paper said. King Hussein's presence among the Muslim leaders in Dakar and his active participation in the summit was a cause of pride for Arabs and Muslims; but the Muslims of Africa were disappointed to see that the Arabs have shunned the summit and missed a good chance for concerning the Islamic countries' actions and discussing issues of concern to their countries, said the paper. The Africans were hoping that such a meeting would lay the foundation for a true and firm cooperation and unity among Muslim brothers, achievements which are opposed by the Western countries, the enemies of Islam and the Arabs, stressed the paper. It said that the Western countries are determined to impose the so-called new world order which entails total disregard to Muslims' interests and disrespect of the Arab and Islamic culture. The paper said that the Americans and the Western countries are doing all they can to keep the Arabs and Muslims divided and in disarray; it is regrettable to see the Arab and Muslim countries helping them to do that and enabling them to maintain a war of genocide on the Iraqi people.

A COLUMNIST in Al Ra'i Arabic daily criticised the European Community countries whose leaders discussed the Middle East among other world issues at their summit in Holland. Mohammad Kharroub said that the final statement issued by the European Community leaders was a retreat from Europe's earlier stance and did not support the just Arab cause. The statement, which was apparently carefully worded to please the Americans and to avoid angering the Israelis, linked a halt of Israeli settlements on Arab lands to Arab countries' ending their boycott of Israel, the writer said. He said that the Europeans were clearly influenced and pressured by the United States which does not want Europe to have a leading role in the peace making process. The writer said it is natural for Europe to play a more active role in this process in the wake of the collapse of the Soviet Union which is supposed to be co-sponsoring the peace negotiations. The writer urged the Arab countries involved in the negotiations to help the Europeans take a more active role in ending their conflict with Israel and in ensuring the restoration of Arab rights and usurped Arab lands.

If the will of the international community and the primacy of international law are upheld, the peoples of the region can enjoy the results of peace

Following is the full text of the address of His Royal Highness Crown Prince Hassan at the American-Arab Anti-Discrimination Committee Conference on Thursday.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

"True peace is not merely the absence of tension; it is the presence of justice." These are the words of a man who lived — and died — for peace, for the end of discrimination and for the beginning of an age of tolerance, co-operation and understanding between peoples and nations. Although he died nearly a quarter of a century ago, his words remain singularly relevant in 1991, and I believe them especially apt today. For your deliberations at this conference — indeed, all of our endeavours — surely owe a great debt to the spirit and wisdom of Dr. Martin Luther King. I would like to take this opportunity to honour the memory of one who did so much to promote the ideals of non-violence, peace and true justice, and who showed how those ideals might one day become realities.

Distinguished delegates,

Dr. King's dictum about the nature of peace is nowhere more applicable than in the Middle East. For almost two decades now, there have been no major wars between the Arab states and Israel. Yet neither has there been peace. In the occupied territories, all the features that one would expect to be present in a state of peace — stability, security, respect for personal and political rights — have been markedly absent. As the infidel goes into its fifth year, distribution of resources continues to be characterised by blatant injustice. This is, of course, to say nothing of the total blanket disregard of legitimate and basic human rights, such as the right to self-determination.

There is no war, but there is no peace, by any criteria. Applying Dr. King's analysis, not only is justice absent, but tension is everpresent. How then may we define this situation? It is a situation that must end, one that cannot be sustained indefinitely; that much we may safely say. But as ever, the difficult questions concern not the situation to be transformed, but the nature of its replacement.

The international peace conference held in Madrid on Oct. 30, 1991 marked a watershed in the history of our troubled region, and pointed the way towards such a replacement. After decades of false dawns, futile initiatives, representatives of all parties concerned with the conflict gathered together, in the hope of laying the groundwork for a long-term and sustainable resolution to the conflict. It is the hope of Jordan that all parties to the process will continue down the long and difficult path to peace in the spirit of open exchange and communication. The fact that we have reached this stage at all owes much to that spirit, and we believe it alone to be capable of fulfilling our mutual desire for peace, security and mutual enrichment.

It has always been Jordan's aim in helping bring about a peaceful and equitable resolution to the Palestine question and the concomitant Arab-Israeli conflict. We believe that the former lies at the heart of the latter, and that progress towards peace hinges on a comprehensive resolution of that question. It must be pointed out here that when we speak of resolving the Palestine question, we are employing

a term that denotes the provision of both material and non-material human needs associated with the development, identity and autonomy of the individual and of groups with which the individual identifies.

Among the central objectives of any state purporting to act in the interests of those living under its regime are the provision of food, basic health, and purpose for all. These objectives are so fundamental to the human condition that they may be classed as minimum requirements which people may legitimately expect of states. The facts on the ground indicate that Palestinians in the occupied territories are discriminated against on a daily basis in respect of these requirements, in flagrant violation of international law. Injustice is thus being perpetrated against the personal, national and political rights of Palestinians at the most basic levels.

With respect to the first of these requirements, I would draw your attention to a few statistics on water in the occupied territories. Since 1967, Palestinians have been prevented from drilling artesian wells for irrigation purposes. As a result, the proportion of Palestinian farmland under irrigation has declined from 27 per cent to only 4 per cent. Some 80 per cent of water from the mountain aquifers, underground reserves beneath the hills of the West Bank, is taken by Israel. West Bank villages account for about one per cent of all the water used in Israel. The Israeli allocation of water resources, naturally scarce in the first place, is discrimination of the most basic kind.

But although the statistics are in themselves cause for grave concern, it is the absence of the third requirement — purpose — that is most worrying. Palestinians in the occupied territories are not provided with any tools of participation, are not accorded the respect necessary to form and manifest their collective will. Purpose requires participation. Participation provides people with an opportunity to manage their own affairs, and makes their identity an object of the state's respect. The collapse of the political systems of Eastern Europe that heralded this decade graphically demonstrated that the power of human needs of identity and autonomy — of participation — is far greater than military power. In the case of Israel, its failure to supply its Palestinian population with adequate supplies of water is therefore but a symptom — though an extremely troubling one — of its failure to provide purpose and participation, which would require involving or consulting that population at the most human level of resource allocation.

It was therefore heartening to note President Bush's call, in his congressional address of March 6, 1991, for the legitimate political rights of the Palestinians in their own homeland, to be a major item for the agenda of the peace conference. At last, the Palestinian national struggle for identity has been rewarded. It has taken decades, but Palestinians are now the masters of their own destiny. In the interests of reaching a resolution to this conflict, which underpins all regional confrontations, Jordan has always demonstrated flexibility as to the modalities and format of peace talks. We welcomed the inclusion of the Palestinians, and willingly provided an umbrella for their participation: the joint delegation. At Madrid, all parties indicated both their willingness to continue negotiations, and their commitment to the ultimate objective: a just and lasting peace for all. As events unfold in Washington, as we make every effort to facilitate

the goal of peace, we trust that history will vindicate our endeavours. But the path is likely to be as difficult as it will be long, and if we are to attain that elusive objective, certain factors must be borne in mind.

From the co-sponsors of the talks, skilful mediation will be required; and sensitive, pragmatic use of the influence available to them will be needed to bridge the gulf that separates the parties on fundamental issues of substance. Questions must now be raised about the co-sponsorship of the Soviet Union, in the wake of the declarations of Russia, the Ukraine and Byelorussia of their commonwealth of Slavic states. It is our hope that the impetus from Moscow as well as Washington will be sustained, in whatever form. There are issues to be discussed that will require balanced mediation, and perhaps given this, more than one mediator will be required. As always, however, it is impossible to predict the outcome of events in the Soviet Union. The pace of international change seems to have accelerated dramatically in the last three years. We can but hope that among the dividends of this rapid transformation will be even greater impetus for peace in our region, the kind of true peace that Dr. King spoke of and worked towards.

Israel, for its part, must accept the cardinal principle of international law that the acquisition of territory by war is inadmissible. Jordan, working within the framework of the U.N. Charter and seeking always to uphold the provisions of international law, has attempted to lay the foundations for many peace initiatives. The basis of our efforts has always been the will of the international community, embodied in U.N. Security Council resolutions 242 and 338. They provide the groundwork for a practicable formula for ending the conflict in our region, by calling for the exchange of territory for peace while safeguarding the security of all states in the region, including Israel. I would like to mention here the "security dilemma," a concept of recent political science. It relates to a situation in which two or more states are locked in an arms race with the motive of enhancing their security. With each step up in the arms process, however, the other side responds with a higher threshold of commitment, ensuring continuous incremental escalation. Thus, the pursuit of security paradoxically leads only to greater insecurity.

In a sense, this is the dilemma facing Israel today. It wishes to guarantee its security, but that will never be possible under the present conditions. The Gulf war merely underlined that fact, for neither did Israel's weapons of mass destruction deter attack by Iraq, nor did the illegal possession of territory hold supposed strategic value. In these days of sophisticated ballistic technology, there can be only one sure guarantee of security. That is not a better weapons system, or an extra yard of land. The sole path to true security is the achievement of equitable and sustainable peace.

The "land for-peace" formula, together with the recognition of the rights of Palestinians to self-determination and to the legitimate political rights of their land and people, is the only basis for the resolution of the conflict. Only if the will of the international community and the primacy of international law are upheld — and seen to be upheld — can the peoples of the

region enjoy the results of peace, and live in dignity, prosperity and true security. The peace we seek goes beyond a state of non-belligerence to one of trust, coordination, and fruitful cooperation over issues such as water, arms control, refugees and the environment. These issues are increasingly pressing, and must be addressed soon. But there is a great deal of ground to make up if the traditional barriers between the sides are to be lowered.

Perhaps the most vital element of the peace process currently in motion is the implementation of measures to build public confidence on both sides. The most urgent and central of these is a freeze on settlements and construction in the occupied territories. Such a freeze would be a mark of good faith and a valuable contribution towards the breakdown of psychological barriers that exist for both parties. Indeed, all parties must refrain from actions which may undermine the continuation of the process. This opportunity has been seized half a century in coming; we believe that none of the parties wish to wait so long for another opportunity, and that they will therefore act only in our common best interests.

Israeli settlements in the occupied territories do not only violate international law, but undermine the primacy of war as an instrument of Israeli foreign policy. Jewish acquisition of land in Palestine has served as the basic vehicle of nation-building. Moreover, the question of settlements has repercussions beyond the occupied territories. It impinges directly on Jordan's national security, and the social, economic and environmental interests of our population.

I mentioned earlier some figures relating to the allocation of water in the West Bank. It is appropriate here to review briefly the history of relations between Jordan and Israel with respect to water. After Israel took control of the River Jordan by diverting its flow in 1964, Jordan began to build a dam on the River Yarmouk. This was deliberately destroyed by Israeli soldiers in the last hours of the 1967 war; and later plans to build a dam further up the Yarmouk have met only with Israeli belligerence. We believe that such policies are conducive only to continued confrontation, and the furtherance of the psychological barriers and material inequities that characterise relations between the sides in the conflict. We believe that now is an appropriate time, and that this would be an appropriate area, for the implementation of confidence building measures on the part of Israel.

I should like to make some observations at this point concerning the effect upon Jordan of the mass displacement of people that has taken place in the Middle East since Iraq's invasion of Kuwait in 1990. Jordan's position differs in several respects from that of other countries which have received displaced people during the recent crisis.

In addition to accommodating large numbers of displaced migrant workers and professionals who were en route to their home countries, Jordan has had to cope with up to 300,000 of its own "refugees" from Kuwait, Iraq and other Gulf states. This amounts to an increase of 10 per cent on a population that already comprised the world's highest proportion of refugees to indigenous population, at one quarter. I would add briefly that the term "refugee" had no real significance for many of these involuntary migrants, as most of them had been away from Jordan for decades, and a large proportion had even been born and brought up

abroad. Their home, on any reasonable construction of the word, was the country which they were obliged to leave. This massive influx placed a tremendous strain on Jordan's ability to provide education, jobs, housing, health care and municipal and public services.

I am proud to tell you today that Jordan rose to that challenge, drawing on the same spirit and determination with which the challenges of the 1948 and 1967 crises were turned ultimately to human advantage. But I cannot deny that a tremendous strain has been placed on Jordan, the effects of which continue to be felt. Heavy investment is still needed. It is estimated that the cost of safeguarding the current standard of living is \$4.3 billion. I would ask you to compare this figure with Israel's request for \$10 billion in housing loan guarantees alone for the influx of a comparable number of Soviet Jews.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

If it is clear that there are great disparities in the region, the nature of the challenges for the future is equally clear. It is for such reasons that Jordan regards multilateral negotiations on regional issues to be of paramount importance. These issues are by their very nature transnational, and must be addressed collectively. This includes not only the regional players, but the international community at large. The region will never know the true peace unless the prevailing disparities are eliminated. We see the problems of the region as fundamentally inter-related, and we view a cooperative global framework for the resolution of our inter-connected regional crises as the only approach likely to succeed. Our thinking has proceeded along the lines of the regional conference on security and cooperation put forward in Europe, and it is this paradigm that I wish to put forward to you as the best chance for lasting peace in the Middle East.

In the past, questions of demography, resources and ideology have been addressed almost exclusively through the dimension of military security. But reliance on this dimension has not, as yet, produced a situation of true peace, security and stability in the region. For example, border disputes have in the past been settled by military force. In the Gulf alone there have been no fewer than 22 active border disputes since 1900. This has in turn fuelled military spending, leading to massive military debts as eager suppliers of arms compete for customers. The inter-relation between energy, arms and debt is plain to see in this context. It is an enduring and telling irony that the five permanent members of the U.N. Security Council, empowered to uphold peace around the world, together account for approximately 90 per cent of the world's arms trade. This over-emphasis on the military dimension has given rise to what may be termed the political economy of despair.

We in Jordan seek to take another approach. It is an innovative, even ambitious, approach, but a brief parallel with developments in Europe will show the reasons why we believe it to be the only one with a chance of ultimate success. Europe, like the Middle East, was plagued by war and internal rivalry for centuries. It is only now proceeding down the path of integration and cooperation. Europeans view this process, the regional conference on security and cooperation, as the most likely to yield lasting resolutions satisfactory to all. This is a belief shared by Jordan.

By way of illustration, in the case of border disputes, we would favour peaceful negotiations with ultimate recourse to the international court of justice, and the implementation of a regional environmental plan, to take another example, rather than dealing with the scarce resource of water through hydraulic wars, we advocate a regional water plan that would ensure fair distribution for all.

In essence, then, our vision is of a Middle Eastern Helsinki process, a conference on security and cooperation for the Middle East. We believe that such a model would eliminate the political economy of despair. Democratisation, freedom of expression, human rights and greater awareness of a reliance on the political and economic dimensions of security provide a route towards the alternative political economy of peace, security and progress. The participation of states with a similar experience in conflict resolution is of course an incentive to assist the countries of the Middle East in overcoming their difficulties.

We are aware that this vision requires the laying aside of dogma, of prejudice, of traditional hostilities. But we must learn tolerance for different ideologies. All ideologies have certain common points, together with their differences. We must develop the breadth of vision to identify and build upon these common points, while remaining firm in our demand that every government respect those universal rights of human beings and fulfill those universal requirements I spoke of earlier. These requirements, like so many of the challenges of today's world, go beyond questions of national strategy or ideological labels. They form the starting point of a humane discourse that appreciates the common ground and moves towards a constructive dialogue. We hope that such a process is now occurring in the Middle East, and we are pledged to do our utmost towards it.

But such a process is hollow unless there are individuals, organisations and governments committed to rectifying conditions of injustice, maintaining public awareness, and championing the causes of peace and equality. I take this opportunity to applaud the American-Arab Anti-Discrimination Committee, and to wish you well in all your endeavours. Your work in providing legal assistance for victims of discrimination is much needed; your efforts to disseminate salient information equally so. Perhaps most important is your work with the media, for in the forum provided by the international media, the power of individuals and organisations to promote ways of thinking based on equality and respect can be used to best effect.

I commenced this address with the words of Dr. Martin Luther King. I should like to end it in the same way, and as I recall his words, I would like you all to bear in mind the conditions that Palestinians in the occupied territories have had to endure, conditions that we must hope are now drawing to their inevitable end, conditions that each and every one of you may play a part in alleviating.

"As long as there is poverty in the world, I can never be rich, even if I have a billion dollars. As long as diseases are rampant and millions of people in this world cannot expect to live more than twenty-eight or thirty years, I can never be totally healthy... I can never be what I ought to be until you are what you ought to be. This is the way our world is made. No individual or nation can stand out boasting of being independent. We are interdependent."

THE WEEK IN PRINT

Israel places obstacles in the path of negotiations

THE current peace talks in Washington, the Palestinian intifada, the situation in Iraq and the Arab World along with domestic issues in Jordan were prominent topics in the local press over the past week.

In discussing the peace talks, Al Ra'i daily said that the Arab countries and the Palestinians have accepted the U.N. resolutions and the international legitimacy and are serious about exchanging land for peace with Israel. But it noted that in light of Israel's behaviour in Washington, there can only be a slim chance for peace should Israel's obstacles continue to obstruct progress.

Al Dostour daily, was of the same view and went further by criticising the United States' stand vis-à-vis the Israeli manoeuvres which, the paper said, are designed to abort the peace process. The Arabs can understand Israel's procrastination, but can by no means understand the U.S. administration's indifference in such behaviour because Washington is supposed to be the sponsor of the negotiations, said the paper.

Sawt Al Shaab daily attacked Israel by saying that it is trying to stir trouble with Lebanon and Syria at the ongoing talks in Washington and has been placing obstacles in the path of negotiations with the Palestinians.

The paper said that the Arabs should be demanding direct intervention from the U.S. administration to put an end to such a practice.

Columnist Tareq Masarweh described Israel's non-abdication to

Washington's rules of the game as a blow to the U.S. dignity and one which should be exploited by the Arab negotiators.

Writing in Al Ra'i, Masarweh said that the Arabs should realise that their negotiating position is not with Israel alone, but rather with the United States, and they should learn from Israel how to manoeuvre and deal with the United States in matters of concern to the Arab Nation.

Salameh Ekour, a columnist in Sawt Al Shaab, said that Israel was trying to appear as the victor dealing with the vanquished Arabs at the Washington paper. Ekour also urged the Arab delegations to involve the United States administration in the process if they seek to force Israel to comply with the requirements of a durable peace.

A guest columnist in Sawt Al Shaab said that if the U.S. is serious about giving the Palestinians their rights, the Washington parity is bound to yield fruitful results.

The writer, N. Abbasi, said that the United States has never supported the Arab cause, but it is forced, through the peace negotiations, to ensure that U.N. Security Council Resolutions 242 and 338 are implemented if it is really sincere about upholding the international legitimacy.

Writing about the Palestinian intifada, now in its fifth year, a columnist in Al Dostour decried the Arab World's non-involvement supporting of the Palestinian people's drive to achieve freedom.

The Arabs allowed Israel to perpetuate its occupation of Arab

lands for the past 25 years, did nothing against Israel's aggression on Lebanon in 1982 and its massacring of Palestinians in Sabra and Shatila camps, said Munes Al Razzaz.

The writer said that the Arabs seem to have given up the course of struggle against the aggressors and the occupiers of their land and have capitulated to the will of the Israeli enemies.

A columnist in Sawt Al Shaab said that the intifada was instrumental in forcing the United States and most of the countries of the world to recognise the rights of the Palestinian people in their homeland.

Arafat Hijazi said that the Palestinian uprising is causing concern to the Israeli settlers and the Israeli troops and prompting the Israeli leaders to work hard as a condition for negotiating with the Palestinians over the future of the Arab land.

It should be noted that following the crushing defeat of the Iraqis, the Palestinians have only themselves to rely on and to pursue their course of struggle to achieve liberation, Hijazi said.

Al Ra'i daily echoed Hijazi's view and said that only through the steadfastness of the Palestinian people and their continued struggle for freedom can the aspirations of the Palestinians everywhere be fulfilled.

The paper said that the legendary steadfastness in the face of atrocities and persecution and acts of terrorism can in the end achieve victory for the oppressed people.

Taber Al Udwan, who writes for

Al Dostour, said that the intifada came in the limelight at the Madrid and Washington peace talks where the negotiators included representatives of the oppressed people in the occupied territories.

The writer said that the presence of the Palestinian negotiators has shown the world that the Palestinians can battle with the Israelis through continued resistance, by all available means, and at the negotiating table.

Ahmad Dabbas wrote in Sawt Al Shaab, a column criticising the little amount of money collected in Jordan and elsewhere in support of the Palestinian people under Israeli rule.

The writer said that the Palestinians had offered too many sacrifices in the course of protecting the Arab land, and that the Jordanian National Committee for the Support of the Palestinians should try harder and work strenuously for the sake of ensuring sufficient help to fuel the Palestinian resistance.

Referring to the sanctions imposed on Iraq, Salameh Ekour said that Iraq has served as a strategic asset for the Arabs in the face of the Israeli enemy, but the Arabs have chosen to abandon the Iraqis in their ordeal.

The writer said that the Arabs are doing nothing to help save the thousands of hungry and sick children of Iraq.

He said that the Arab Nation has the means to end the injustice but its leaders are choosing to allow the Iraqis to starve and to see their own countries' wealth being pilaged by the aggressors.

Government assured

(Continued from page 1)

Abdul Latif Arabiyat, a Brotherhood deputy and speaker of the House, will take a lone position and vote in favour of the government while the 21 other members of the group will either vote against or abstain. Dr. Hawamdeh said:

"We will vote as a group. We are still considering the pros and cons of an abstention and a 'no' vote. But one thing is sure: we will vote as a single bloc and our votes will not be split."

Some of the Brotherhood supporters feel that an abstention by the group in the vote of confidence might weaken its position among its constituency. "The followers of the Brotherhood (the movement) and do not understand real politik," said one such supporter. "If the Brotherhood deputies abstain they run the risk of the abstention being viewed as weakness," he said.

Sources in the Democratic Bloc said four of its members were definitely going to vote in favour of the government while five had not made up their minds as of Friday and were awaiting further consultations with their allied political groups outside parliament. However, added one source, at least two of the five were seriously considering voting in support of the government.

Similarly, sources among the independent deputies said while six of the 10 deputies had definitely made up their mind to vote "yes," four others — who, like the Brotherhood and some members of the Democratic Bloc,

oppose the peace process — had very clearly indicated they would vote against the government.

Meanwhile, the government is hoping that the Brotherhood will abstain, thus reducing the number of "no" votes and establishing its parliamentary endorsement beyond any doubt.

According to a highly informed source, the government feels that it has made a series of conciliatory gestures towards the Brotherhood despite the group's refusal to join the government.

The source referred to the carefully orchestrated scenario on the House floor earlier this month when Dr. Arabiyat was re-elected speaker. He also pointed out that commutation of six death sentences passed on convicted members of "Mohammad's Army" — who in the past had Brotherhood links — and the reduction of jail sentences passed on others should have gone well with the Brotherhood.

Notwithstanding, the mood of some of the hardcore members of the Brotherhood was said to have been upset by the strong tone of the King's speech from the throne earlier this month — which in turn being put in front of Parliament as the government statement of policy.

"Nowhere but in Jordan does the Brotherhood have any political clout and freedom as well as presence in the legislative authority," noted a high-ranking parliament member. "The Brotherhood knows that very well" and they may not want to look as blocking the democratisation process.

Talks resume on Monday

(Continued from page 1)

to the Israelis that the meetings be held in "sequential form" to solve this problem. "We are aware that the Israeli delegation is made up of 14 members and headed by one person, which means that if we had meetings at the same time, they would necessarily divide into seven each and one of the meetings would not be chaired by the head of the Israeli party," Dr. Anani explained.

"To resolve this problem, we proposed that they be held in sequential form so that it would be attended by the heads of both parties to the bilateral negotiations. Now it is almost agreed upon."

The Israeli demand for dividing the joint delegation into subcommittees has been dropped and an agreement has been reached that issues on the separate agendas of the Jordan-Israeli track and the Palestinian-Israeli track could be discussed in sub-committees which would break out from the two

tracks rather than the joint delegation itself.

"Now we have two delegations — an Israeli one and a joint Jordanian-Palestinian delegation — three parties to the two-track negotiations — Israeli, Jordanian and Palestinian," Dr. Anani said.

"From any one of the two separate tracks, sub-committees may be formed to discuss the separate issues on the one or the other agenda, the subcommittees, to stress the difference, will not stem from the joint delegation itself but from the separate tracks."

The subcommittees, Dr. Anani explained, "will be formed but their number and designation will be determined as necessary."

Another issue that has also been almost resolved was over the agenda of the bilateral negotiations in the Palestinian-Israeli track.

The Israelis have insisted that the agenda of their talks with Palestinians include only the one item of the interim self-government arrange-

ment, which has come to be known as ISGA.

This proposal was rejected by the joint delegation, and a final proposal, which Dr. Anani said has almost been accepted, would set the agenda for the talks to "Palestinian-Israeli matters including interim self government arrangement."

The joint delegation had argued that the letter of assurances from the Americans had specified that the Palestinian-Israeli agenda would "begin with ISGA but not be exclusively on that subject," Dr. Anani said.

"The Israelis told us that they don't take orders from anybody, in this case the Americans, and that they have their own authority, legitimacy and sovereignty."

In commenting on Thursday morning's talks with the leaders of the joint delegation, Israeli Deputy Minister Benjamin Netanyahu said that "couch talks" continued on the Jordanian-Palestinian front, but that the "gap is apparently narrowing."

However, that it was still "too early

to tell," and that the Israeli negotiators would make "good faith attempts" to bridge the gap (Thursday) afternoon, Mr. Netanyahu said further that negotiator Elyakim Rubenstein was "working very patiently" to arrive at an understanding.

Asked repeatedly if Israel's ongoing settlement activity contradicted its claim to want peace, Mr. Netanyahu repeated the position he has argued all week; that is, the Palestinian problem should be solved through Jordan, and not through "excising" another state out of the "disputed" territories. He claimed that it was unfair that the Arabs were continuing to "settle" the territories while Israel "is not allowed to do anything."

He said further that if peace meant "excising peace" then it would "fragment the international order... tear it asunder."

Later Arab contacts and internal Jordanian delegation meetings continued Friday in a concerted effort to further strengthen Arab coordination and Jordanian-Palestinian harmony.

Air France promotes services

AMMAN (J.T.) — Air France's regional manager for Jordan, Lebanon, Syria and Iraq Thursday hosted a dinner at the Marriott Hotel. The dinner was attended by a number of directors of travel and tourist offices, Air France's clients, media representatives and senior officials.

Addressing the audience, the regional director highlighted the services provided by the Air France to its customers aboard the Air France planes.

The dinner was also attended by Air France's Jordan manager.

Syrian talks

(Continued from page 1)

Yusef Hadass and Uri Lubrani, co-chairmen of the Israeli delegation to the peace talks with Lebanon, said the two sides had "laid down some principles of a peace treaty between Israel and Lebanon in the future."

Mr. Hadass said after Thursday's meeting that security arrangements were being discussed in the framework of a peace treaty between the two countries. "We consider (resolution) 425 as part of the process."

We are here to discuss peace," Both Mr. Hadass and Mr. Lubrani refused to elaborate.

Chief of the Lebanese delegation Subeil Shammas told reporters that discussions with Israel continued a "businesslike manner" on substantive issues.

"We air our differences and we shall continue in that spirit," Mr. Shammas said. "We shall persevere and we shall show patience and we will continue to be here until we conclude some positive results," he said. The Lebanese-Israeli talks will also reconvene Monday.

U.S. newspapers report on talks

(Continued from page 1)

approach would also require Palestinians to refrain from characterizing their negotiating group as a "delegation."

However, these sources indicated that there was still disagreement about the nature of the two-track approach, with the Palestinians and Jordanians seeking to split the issues along national lines, and the Israelis insisting on what they call a "topical" approach. This approach is said to involve creating working groups to deal with issues such as Palestinian self-government, land tenure and water allocation. "Such a division would inevitably blur the line between questions that apply solely to Jordan or solely to the Palestinians and require both to be involved in the negotiations," according to the report.

All reports note that disagreement also remains over how many Palestinians and Jordanians should participate in such a track,

and on the role of the joint delegation once the tracks are divided. According to the Washington Times, Israel continued to insist Thursday on "some role for the joint delegation — such as occasional three-way meetings."

The Washington Times seemed to sum up the feeling at week's end with a comment from an Arab diplomat: "Nobody's packing. Nobody wants to take the blame for an impasse. And this is good."

The Christian Science Monitor carried an essay by I. William Zartman, entitled "Road map to peace in the Middle East," which echoed many of the suggestions offered recently by the U.S. Institute of Peace to its report on 50 years of negotiating Middle East peace. Mr. Zartman draws heavily on Camp David, and like the U.S. Institute, recommends that what he calls the "biggest problems," including permanent status, settlements and Jerusalem, be "pushed down" the agenda for later discussion.

'Peace needs broader vision'

(Continued from page 1)

guarantee of security," he said. "That is not a better weapons system or an extra yard of land. The sole path to true security is the achievement of equitable and sustainable peace."

An Israeli withdrawal from the occupied Arab territories in line with Resolutions 242 and 338 is an "integral part" of the Middle East peace process, he affirmed.

The Crown Prince called on Israel to begin implementing confidence-building measures so that the momentum of the peace process could be maintained and goodwill could be displayed as a catalyst for arriving at a just and equitable solution to the conflict.

Such measures, he said, should start with an immediate freeze in Israel's settlement activity in the occupied territories.

The Crown Prince elaborated on the repercussions of the lingering Middle East conflict on Jordan and the danger inherent in the continued Israeli settlement activity.

"Sixty per cent of the land today, 100 per cent of the land and 100 per cent of the people tomorrow," he said referring to the consequences of Israeli designs and actions aimed at securing the land without people and the Jewish state's arguments that Jordan was the homeland of the Palestinian people.

He also cited the burdens Jordan had faced and is still facing as a result of the Gulf crisis.

Jordan rose to the challenge of coping with the influx of hundreds of thousands of third country nationals fleeing the Gulf war theatre — "when you were watching the build up to the Gulf crisis on CNN, we in Jordan were digging latrines in the desert," he said.

Jordan is facing severe economic pressure as a result of the problems posed by the return of 300,000 expatriates from Kuwait, Iraq and other Gulf states, he noted. The "returnees" — representing an addition of 10 per cent to Jordan's population — added to the burdens of the Kingdom, which was already housing "the world's highest proportion of refugees to indigenous population."

Prince Hassan referred to studies which indicated that Jordan needed \$4.5 billion in five years to maintain the current standard of living for its people in the wake of the massive rise in population and compared it with Israel's request for \$10 billion in American loan guarantees to help absorb a comparable number of Soviet Jewish emigrants.

The pressures that have been brought to bear upon Jordan, he said, appear to be aimed at diluting any positive contribution from the Kingdom to the peace process.

The Crown Prince concluded his keynote address with an obvious message to the Americans by recalling

Dr. Luther King's words: "As long as there is poverty in the world, I can never be rich even if I have a billion dollars. As long as diseases are rampant and millions of people in this world cannot expect to live more than 28 or 30 years, I can never be totally healthy... I can never be what I ought to be until you are what you ought to be. This is the way our world is made. No individual or nation can stand out boasting of being independent. We are interdependent."

Welcoming the audience at Thursday's fund-raising banquet was Nidal Sukhtian, a prominent Jordanian businessman who spearheads ADC activities in the Kingdom.

Mr. Sukhtian, extending all-out support for the American-led peace process and the Bush administration position vis-a-vis peace in the Middle East, urged continued backing for the policies of the White House.

Mr. Sukhtian expressed appreciation and gratitude for the countless number of Jordan's youth who offered their voluntary services to help build the Arab case through research and other preparations.

Former Senator James Abourezk, who is of Arab origin, praised Crown Prince Hassan for his "intellectual contributions" not only in the context of the Middle East and the Arab World but also on the international level.

Sen. Abourezk told the gathering that ADC was active in defending the Arab cause and rights and acts as a lobbying group in the U.S. He said the ADC had played a prominent role in the decision of the Bush administration to delay congressional consideration of the Israeli request for \$10 billion in loan guarantees.

Nick Rahal, serving democratic congressman, who is also of Arab heritage, paid tribute to His Majesty King Hussein and his "courageous and bold" positions vis-a-vis Middle East peace efforts.

He agreed with Mr. Abourezk that the ADC had had an active role and contribution to delaying the Israeli request being tabled in Congress and said it was unlikely that American lawmakers would endorse it with the traditional ease when it is brought up in January.

Many U.S. lawmakers are feeling that "enough is enough" in doling out American taxpayers' money to Israel, he said.

Among those attending Thursday's banquet were His Royal Highness Princess Rahma Bint Al Hussein, Royal Court Chief Adnan Abu Odeh, Information Minister Mahmoud Sharif, ADC President Albert Mukhaiber, former ADC President Abdeen Jabara and prominent ADC activist Wafa Nassar.

The \$1,000-per-couple banquet raised close to \$125,000 ADC officials said.

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U.S. Dollar in International Markets

Currency	NEW YORK CLOSE Date: 11/12/91	TOKYO CLOSE Date: 12/12/91
Sterling Pound	1.8052	1.8100
Deutsche Mark	1.5780	1.5740
Swiss Franc	1.3925	1.3900
French Franc	5.3835	5.3820
Japanese Yen	129.30	128.90
European Currency Unit	1.2910	1.2924

* USD Per JYU
** European Opening at 8:00 a.m. GMT

Eurocurrency Interest Rates

Currency	1 MTH	3 MTHS	6 MTHS	12 MTHS
U.S. Dollar	4.81	4.43	4.37	4.50
Sterling Pound	10.62	10.56	10.43	10.43
Deutsche Mark	9.43	9.43	9.43	9.38
Swiss Franc	8.12	8.00	7.93	7.87
French Franc	10.00	9.87	9.87	9.75
Japanese Yen	6.18	5.93	5.71	5.56
European Currency Unit	10.62	10.56	10.43	10.25

Interbank bid rates for amounts exceeding U.S. Dollars 1,000,000 or equivalent.

Precious Metals	USD/Oz	JD/Gm	Metal	USD/Oz	JD/Gm
Gold	365.95	6.95	Silver	3.95	.086

Central Bank of Jordan Exchange Rate Bulletin

Currency	Bid	Offer
U.S. Dollar	0.679	0.681
Sterling Pound	1.2292	1.2353
Deutsche Mark	0.431	0.4332
Swiss Franc	0.4887	0.4911
French Franc	0.1263	0.1269
Japanese Yen	0.5261	0.5267
Dutch Guilder	0.3825	0.3844
Swedish Krona	0.1178	0.1184
Italian Lira	0.0571	0.0574
Belgian Franc	0.02059	0.02099

Other Currencies

Currency	Bid	Offer
Bahraini Dinar	1.7720	1.7780
Lebanese Lira	0.0770	0.0777
Saudi Riyal	0.1807	0.1813
Kuwaiti Dinar	-	-
Qatari Riyal	0.1840	0.1849
Egyptian Pound	0.2000	0.2170
Omani Riyal	1.7380	1.7460
UAE Dirham	0.1840	0.1849
Greek Drachma	0.3650	0.3780
Cypriot Pound	1.500	1.5200

CAB Indices for Amman Financial Market

Index	11/12/91	Close	10/12/91	Close
All-Share	127.68		127.50	
Banking Sector	105.44		105.66	
Insurance Sector	128.45		128.69	
Industry Sector	160.69		159.87	
Services Sector	143.20		142.95	

December 31, 1990 = 100

Germany launches campaign for sale of eastern firms

BERLIN (R) — Germany launched a Europe-wide sales campaign Thursday to sell around 6,500 former communist firms to foreigners in an effort to open up the privatisation of east German industry to outside investors.

The government's Treuhand privatisation agency said it wanted to keep up its rapid sale of industries next year by approaching small- and medium-sized investors in Europe, who have kept out of buying eastern firms.

Treuhand Director Horst Urban said the agency, entrusted with the world's largest privatisation programme, would place

advertisements in regional and national newspapers from January listing companies for sale.

"We'll be advertising every week, in every country," said Mr. Urban, recently appointed to run the agency's newly created investor services department.

Mr. Urban was previously chief executive of German tyre maker Continental A.G. He was dismissed in May after trying to stop a takeover by a foreign investor, Italy's Pirelli S.p.A.

The campaigns, which will cost the agency more than 10 million marks (\$6 million), may be extended to Asia and the United States, Mr. Urban told reporters.

Slovenia, Russia sign trade protocol

VIENNA (R) — Russia and Yugoslavia's breakaway republic of Slovenia have signed a trade protocol allowing Slovenia to import oil and gas from Russia in exchange for industrial goods next year, a senior official said Thursday.

Under the \$720 million barter deal, the first between individual Yugoslav and Soviet republics, Slovenia will import energy and other raw materials, Deputy

Foreign Minister Vojka Ravbar told Reuters by phone from Slovenia's capital Ljubljana.

Slovenia will import 700,000 tonnes of oil, 950 million cubic metres of gas, other oil products, chemicals and raw materials for its metals, furniture and textiles industries.

In return it will supply the Russian Federation with machinery, medicine, furniture and shoes, Mr. Ravbar said.

India, China reopen crossborder trade

NEW DELHI (R) — India and China, the world's most populous nations, agreed Friday to reopen cross-border trade halted since they fought a brief war in 1962.

They signed the trade pact following a second and last two-hour session of talks between Indian Prime Minister P.V. Narasimha Rao and the visiting Chinese Premier Li Peng.

No details of the accord were immediately available but Indian officials said each country would open one border point to trade and most of it would go through Tibet.

The Tibetans said Friday they feared the trade accord could damage the industries they had set up in India.

OECD panel questions strength, timing of world economic recovery

PARIS (R) — Officials of the world's leading industrial nations said Thursday they were having second thoughts about the strength and timing of a global economic recovery that they had forecast for next year.

"We see a good chance... for a recovery of the world economy, but it might be weaker and a little bit more delayed than expected earlier," Hans Tietmeyer, deputy president of the Bundesbank, Germany's central bank, told a news conference.

He was speaking after a meeting of a key committee of the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD), an economic think-

tank for the richest industrial nations.

In its last semi-annual outlook published in July, the Paris-based forum said conditions looked right for growth to take off again in the economies of its 24 member nations.

But the OECD's working party 3, a group comprising mainly finance ministers and central bank officials, agreed at a meeting Thursday that business and consumer confidence was still lacking in many countries.

Mr. Tietmeyer, the chairman of the panel, said the restructuring of the financial sector and individuals' concern about their wealth had sapped confidence.

In some countries consumers felt the value of their assets was less and some — especially in the United States — had relatively high debt, he said.

Last July, the OECD predicted that gross national product growth in its member countries would rebound to 2.9 per cent in 1992 from 1.1 per cent in this year.

But, according to economic diplomats, the OECD has now cut its forecast for next year's growth to 2.2 per cent.

The forecasts are due to be published in the OECD's end-year economic outlook on Dec. 20.

Growth in the United States next year, which the OECD put at around 2.6 per cent only a month ago, is now expected to be just 2.2 per cent.

The OECD has revised down its forecast for 1992 growth in Germany to 1.8 per cent from 2.2 per cent and scaled back its prediction for Japan to 2.4 per cent from 3.5 per cent.

Diplomats said economic data from the United States, Japan and Germany in the last month had led the OECD to take a gloomier view.

But they said a double-dip recession — recovery followed by another economic plunge — was unlikely either in the United States or elsewhere.

Japan trade surplus shows continuous increase

TOKYO (R) — Japan's trade surplus nearly tripled in November from the year before and economic analysts said international pressure on Tokyo to tackle the imbalance was bound to increase.

Japan's customs-cleared trade widened to an unadjusted \$6.56 billion surplus from \$2.24 billion in November 1990, the government has announced.

"It shows a continuing reversal of the trade adjustment process, and is bound to increase trade friction with the U.S.," said Marshall Gittler, economist at UBS Phillips and Drew International Ltd.

Seasonally adjusted, the surplus widened to \$7.45 billion against a downward revised \$6.44 billion in October.

"It's likely to put more pressure on Japan to open up its rice market in the Uruguay Round of GATT negotiations," Mr. Gittler said.

Japan, impelled by its powerful farm lobby, has consistently refused to allow rice imports despite pressure during the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade (GATT) talks.

Japan's trade surplus is ballooning despite the yen's strengthening this year, casting doubt on the effectiveness of international efforts dating back to the 1985 Plaza accord.

Under the accord, major nations including the United States and Japan agreed to adjust their currencies to correct trade imbalances.

The efforts showed good results in 1990 but Japan's surplus this year has been growing with gusto.

"Volume is not driving the changes, it's prices," said Robert Feldman, vice president of economics research at Salomon Brothers Asia Ltd.

"Imports such as oil cost less, and exporters, have been able to maintain volumes despite higher prices," he said.

EC at odds over timing of Third World aid boost

BRUSSELS (R) — European Community (EC) governments pledged Thursday to spend 0.7 per cent of their economic output on aid to the Third World, but only a handful of the 12 members committed themselves to do so before the next century.

EC environment ministers, preparing for next June's "earth summit" in Rio De Janeiro, agreed that rich countries had to grant developing nations fresh financing to help them tackle global environmental challenges.

"In order to assist developing countries in the implementation of sustainable development policies... the EC and its member states reaffirm their commitment to reach the accepted U.N. target of 0.7 per cent of gross national product (GNP) for (overseas development assistance)," they said.

Based on the EC's total economic output in 1989 of 4.4 trillion ECUs, or \$5.729 trillion, 0.7 per cent would be equal to roughly \$40 billion of aid for the EC bloc.

But a pledge to reach the target level by the year 2000 contained in an earlier draft was dropped from the final version of the EC's "common platform" for the Rio U.N. Conference on Environment and Development (UNCED).

Officials said even a reference to achieving the aid goal "at the earliest possible stage" was too much for some delegations. In the end the text avoided mentioning a timetable.

Dutch Minister Hans Alders said the Netherlands, Italy, France and Denmark did, however, commit themselves to reaching the target by the end of the decade, while Germany pledged to do so as soon as possible.

Data from the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) show that of the five countries, only the Germans and Italians would have to make an appreciable effort to fulfil their commitment.

According to OECD figures, Denmark, the Netherlands and France were already comfortably above the 0.7 per cent level last year. By comparison, Britain's development aid was equivalent to 0.21 per cent of GNP and Ireland's 0.16 per cent.

More aid for the Third World is seen by many as essential if developing nations are to be able to afford the economic changes required to combat global environmental threats like the green-

house effect and the destruction of tropical rainforests.

Facing a persistent recession, much of the industrialised world is feeling poor and reluctant to dig deep into its pockets — a stance that could jeopardise prospects for a North-South deal to protect the world environment at the Rio conference.

At a meeting of OECD development and environment ministers in Paris last week, the United States refused to sign up to the idea of channelling more cash to poor nations for environmental schemes.

Despite EC ministers' failure Thursday to set a common timetable for reaching the 0.7 per cent target, Mr. Alders said the position adopted was a step forward nonetheless.

"Before it was ever even possible to have a text which mentioned 0.7," he told Reuters after chairing the meeting. "To have a text which talks of reaching it is some progress."

Amman Financial Market weekly trading

Following is a summary of trading during last week and the previous week:

	Dec. 7-11	Nov. 30-Dec. 4
Daily average	JD 2,613,799	JD 1,886,906
Total volume	JD 13,068,596	JD 9,825,831
Total shares	7,898,662	5,216,285
No. of contracts	7,343	4,879

Sectoral trading:

	JD 7,100,661 (54.3%)	JD 4,190,580 (46.4%)
Industrial		
Financial	JD 4,144,270 (31.7%)	JD 3,468,879 (38.5%)
Service	(12.0%)	(13.4%)
Insurance	(2.0%)	(1.7%)
Share price index	144.9	148.1
No. of companies	80	80
Price movement (rise)	60	48
(Decline)	15	26
(Stable)	5	14

WORLD STOCK MARKETS

FRANKFURT — German shares elung to early gains in a moderately active session, pushing the 30-share DAX index to an 0.8 per cent higher close that could prove the start of a year-end rally, dealers said. It ended at 1,558.34, up 11.95.

ZURICH — Swiss shares closed a moderately active session firmer and just off the day's highs. The SPI-index rose seven points to close at 1,029.8.

LONDON — Shares staged a modest rally, extending Thursday's gains on the perception that the market has been oversold recently. The FTSE closed at 2,451.6, up 43 points.

PARIS — Bargain-hunters stocked a one per cent rally in French shares but traders said the gains were feeble and that the big-time buyers were on the sidelines. The blue-chip CAC-40 index closed up 16.65 at 1,688.27.

NEW YORK — U.S. stocks edged up towards the session's peak in late morning trade. The Dow-30 stood about 23 points at 2918.

LONDON EXCHANGE RATES

LONDON (R) — Following are the buying and selling rates for leading world currencies and gold against the dollar at mid-session on the London foreign exchange and bullion markets Friday.

	U.S. dollars	U.S. dollars
One Sterling	1.8090/8100	
One U.S. dollar	1.1405/10	Canadian dollar
	1.5810/20	Deutsche marks
	1.7830/40	Dutch guilders
	1.3985/90	Swiss francs
	32.58/62	Belgian francs
	5.4020/70	French francs
	1196/1179	Italian lire
	128.85/95	Japanese yen
	5.7810/60	Swedish crowns
	6.2220/70	Norwegian crowns
	6.1580/1630	Danish crowns
One ounce of gold	359.15/65	U.S. dollars

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Jordan Electricity Authority Hussein Thermal Power Station

Announcement Of Tender Availability Reverse Osmosis Unit Tender No. 82/91

Jordan Electricity Authority (JEA) announces the Reverse Osmosis Unit Tender document, No. 82/91, for the Hussein Thermal Power Station is available for purchase as of 15 December 1991.

The tender consists of the design, supply, delivery, erection, testing and commissioning of one (1) Reverse Osmosis unit of 33 m³/h capacity with related auxiliaries in addition to one (1) product water storage tank of 500 m³ capacity and one (1) Acid storage tank of 25 m³ capacity. Sealed tenders shall be submitted to the tendering committee before 10.00 a.m. Amman time. 15 February, 1992 at the JEA offices.

The tenderer shall submit with his tender a tender bond amounting JD 25,000 in accordance with the tender documents.

Tender documents are available from the address given below for a non-refundable fee of JD 50 payable to JEA for each copy of the tender documents.

Jordan Electricity Authority
Post Office Box 2310
Amman, Jordan
Telefax: 21259/23270

Momentum builds for new commonwealth; Gorbachev hints at resignation

MOSCOW (AP) — Boris Yeltsin's new commonwealth gained momentum Friday with his pledge that five more republics could join as equal partners, making it almost certain that President Mikhail Gorbachev would resign.

Mr. Gorbachev is likely to resign when the legislatures of most of the remaining 12 Soviet republics formally vote to join the commonwealth of independent states, said a Kremlin source. That could come as early as next week, said the source, who spoke on condition that he not be further identified.

The leaders of Kazakhstan and the predominantly Muslim republics of Kirgizia, Tadzhikistan, Turkmenistan and Uzbekistan agreed to join the new commonwealth if they are recognised as co-founders.

Participation by the five republics, which have a combined population of about 50 million, is crucial to the success of the commonwealth formed Sunday by the three Slavic republics of Russia, Belarus and Ukraine.

Soviet and Western observers have warned that if the Muslim republics do not join the commonwealth, they may form a separate group, setting up a volatile ethnic and religious split.

"We understand the drive of the leaders of Belorussia, Russia and Ukraine to create in the place of previously shackled republics, a commonwealth of independent law-governed states," the five republics said following a meeting in the Turkmen capital of Ashkhabad.

"All the states forming the commonwealth should be recognised as its founders," said their statement, carried in Soviet media.

"The commonwealth cannot be formed on ethnic, religious or any other principles violating human rights and the rights of nations," Uzbekistan cautioned that it would not make a formal application until

after its presidential elections on Dec. 29.

TASS said the statement emphasised the need to preserve central control over nuclear weapons, strategic forces and the navy. Kazakhstan is one of four Soviet republics which houses nuclear weapons.

Radio Russia said Mr. Yeltsin telephoned Uzbek President Islam Karimov to welcome their membership.

"Karimov has received an affirmative answer to the question of the possibility of the Central Asian republics taking part in founding the commonwealth," Radio Russia said.

The restructuring effort comes as the government battles one crisis after another, the latest a fuel shortage that TASS reported forced more than half of all Soviet airports to close Thursday and led to the cancellation of most domestic flights of the state Aeroflot Airline.

On Thursday, the Russian parliament overwhelmingly ratified the commonwealth agreement, and Mr. Gorbachev told reporters he would quit if the republics clearly chose it over his proposed union treaty.

"If that's how the process ends, I will resign. It is completely clear, no question about it," he said.

A source close to Mr. Gorbachev said Friday that the Soviet president likely would announce his resignation in a speech after lawmakers in seven of the 12 former Soviet republics said following a meeting in the Turkmen capital of Ashkhabad.

Mr. Gorbachev is seeking to preserve a single state with a central government in Moscow. The commonwealth would make each of the republics fully independent except for joint control over nuclear weapons.

Minsk, the Belorussian capital, would be home to the commonwealth's coordinating body, which

has not yet been created or defined.

Mr. Yeltsin announced Thursday that he had the support of the Soviet military, and Moldavia's President Mircea Snegur said that his republic had a "positive attitude" toward the new formation.

In a short, straightforward address to the Russian legislature before it gave its approval, Mr. Yeltsin sought to portray the commonwealth as not just a Slavic organisation but open to all Soviet republics.

"I cannot agree that it is based on an ethnic, Slavic principle," he said. "We have equal respect for people of different nationalities."

Mr. Yeltsin said the commonwealth represented perhaps the last chance for preserving order and cooperation.

"Obstructing it now ... will inevitably doom people to new suffering, not only plunging our state into chaos but creating a real threat for mankind," he warned.

The popular Russian president said the need for a commonwealth had become apparent since the failed August coup, as eight of the 15 former Soviet republics refused to join Mr. Gorbachev's proposed confederation.

He dismissed Mr. Gorbachev's criticism that the commonwealth would lead to the destruction of the nation, countering that it would "save everything that is healthy and can be saved."

Russian lawmakers approved the commonwealth by a vote of 188-6, meaning that the legislatures of all three Slavic republics have now ratified the treaty.

President Askar Akayev of Kirgizia reiterated Friday the republics were "not excluding the possibility of using Mikhail Gorbachev in the new commonwealth ... but it all depends on Gorbachev himself."

But in a rambling, two-hour interview with Soviet reporters Thursday, Mr. Gorbachev edged closer to resigning, saying, "the main work of my life is done."

He pledged to accept the decision of the republic legislatures but added: "I have expressed my point of view and I will continue to express it, because I am convinced that we are now making the biggest mistake since the beginning of perestroika. ... We are destroying a state when it needs to be reformed."

In what sounded much like a farewell statement, Mr. Gorbachev said "a great deal befell my fate" and took pride that "I have managed — not without mistakes — to push through the main ideas of perestroika."

He said he would reject a role in the new commonwealth even if offered a ceremonial job: "I do not see myself as guest of honour at a wedding."

Meanwhile several people are reported killed and wounded Friday as simmering ethnic tensions in the breakaway Soviet Republics of Moldova boiled over into fighting.

Soviet news agencies said police of the Romanian-majority government fought with militia of the Russian-speaking minority at Dubossary, 50 kilometres north-east of the capital Kishinyov.

Russian television said the clashes were still continuing, with government forces occupying the south and west of the town and guards of the self-proclaimed Dnestr Republic, which is opposed to Moldova's accession, in control of the north and east.

The Interfax Agency quoted a Dnestr spokesman as saying three guardsmen had been killed. A local journalist in Kishinyov quoted official radio as reporting dead and wounded on the government side as well.

It was the first major confrontation in the republics in a year. The Moldovan government has declared independence from the Soviet Union and is moving towards some form of unification with neighbouring Romania.

Leaders of the Russian and Ukrainian minorities, which make up some 27 per cent of the population of 4.3 million, have declared the secession from Moldova of the Dnestr region, on the east bank of the Dnestr River.

TASS said an unconfirmed report put the death toll at 13 and that there had been civilian casualties.

In another development, Ukrainian President Leonid Kravchuk Thursday appointed himself commander-in-chief of all non-nuclear Soviet Armed Forces on Ukrainian territory.

Mr. Kravchuk's decree, expected for weeks, created a Ukrainian national army out of former units of the Soviet army and Black Sea fleet.

Mr. Gorbachev had been the nominal commander-in-chief of Soviet forces in Ukraine until the decree, which was effective immediately.

Mr. Kravchuk signed the document after meeting top military and fleet commanders in Kiev Thursday. His press secretary, Vladimir Shlyaposhnikov, said no objections were raised.

"They now consider themselves part of the Armed Forces of Ukraine," Mr. Shlyaposhnikov said.

Also on Thursday, Ukraine formally recognised the independence of Crimea and Slovakia.

Lawmakers created a committee to combat AIDS, introduced a penalty of five years in jail for medical workers who infect patients with the disease, and established compulsory blood testing for high-risk groups, including prostitutes and drug addicts.

Battles rage in Croatia U.N. chief against recognition

ZAGREB, Yugoslavia (AP) — Heavy fighting raged Friday on Croatia's central front, where Croat defenders reportedly have made badly needed gains in recent days.

Fighting was reported around the town of Sisak and Nova Gradiska south east of Zagreb as well as around Pakrac and Lipik just to the north.

The embattled Eastern Croatian stronghold of Osijek came under heavy attack overnight, local defence officials said. The Adriatic port of Zadar also came under fire.

Meanwhile in New York, U.N. Secretary-General Javier Perez de Cuellar warned European nations that recognising the independence of Croatia and neighbouring Slovenia could widen the war in Yugoslavia. Both republics declared their independence on June 25.

Croatia and Slovenia reportedly plan to establish diplomatic relations next week, the Belgrade-based Tanjug News Agency reported Thursday.

Germany and Austria have indicated they may recognise the two republics by the end of the year. The United States opposes recognition.

"I am worried that any early, selective recognition could widen the present conflict and fuel an explosive situation, especially in Bosnia-Herzegovina and also Macedonia," Mr. Perez de Cuellar said in a letter Wednesday to European Community (EC) leaders. It was released at the United Nations Thursday.

The rump Serbian-dominated presidency, in a statement issued to the federal Tanjug News Agency, welcomed Mr. Perez de Cuellar's statement. It said recognising the independence of any part of Yugoslavia would open the way to "secessionism on European soil."

The statement reiterated that a solution to the Yugoslav crisis should be the "result of a democratic procedure, with all the nations of Yugoslavia participating."

It said "prejudging the outcome of this democratic way by other states," would violate international law.

Slovenia, Croatia, Macedonia and ethnically mixed Bosnia-Herzegovina have refused to attend sessions of the eight-nation collective federal presidency for months, leaving what was Yugoslavia's top federal body truncated by half and comprising only Serbia and its allies.

Former British Prime Minister Margaret Thatcher also has campaigned for recognition of Croatia, which would allow EC countries supply it with weapons to fight off the advance of the Serbian-led federal army. A Security Council arms embargo currently prohibits shipping weapons to Yugoslavia.

Many officials believe European recognition of Croatia would lead ethnic Serbs in the Republic of Bosnia-Herzegovina and elsewhere in Yugoslavia to take up arms in a war that until now has been confined to Croatia.

The European Community is expected to discuss recognition of Slovenia and Croatia when its foreign ministers meet Monday in Brussels.

In a further sign of the splintering of the Yugoslav Federation, Macedonia's President, Kiro Gligorov, asked the European Community to consider recognising his republic as well at the Monday meeting, Tanjug reported.

Macedonians voted overwhelmingly in favour of sovereignty in a referendum in September.

In recent days, there have been reports of Croatian fighters turning back Serbian advances in a few regions of their war-torn republic.

The Croats reportedly took 13 Serb-held villages on the central front earlier this week.

Croatian radio reported a heavy attack began Friday morning on Nova Gradiska, on the main Zagreb-Belgrade Highway.



500-year-old crucifix found at Columbus' settlement

GAINESVILLE, Florida (AP) — A tiny crucifix unearthed at the first settlement founded by Christopher Columbus may be the oldest symbol of Christianity in the western hemisphere, an archaeologist said. The 1.5-inch (3.5-centimetre) tall cross, which includes a representation of Jesus Christ, was found at La Isabella, where Columbus established the first European colony in the Americas nearly 500 years ago. The cross is made of pewter and iron. A copper alloy was used for Christ's body. "It is a direct expression of the Catholicism brought to the Americas by the Spanish," said Kathleen Deagan, an archaeologist from the University of Florida, who spent the past three years working on the excavation. She and others worked with Venezuelan archaeologist Jose F. Cruzet in the Dominican Republic. They discovered a previously unknown settlement and evidence that wheel-thrown pottery was introduced 30 years earlier than previously thought. La Isabella was founded on Columbus' second voyage to the new world in 1493 and existed only until 1498. The cross had been undisturbed for centuries.

Mrs. Bush voices sympathy for Gorbachev

WASHINGTON (R) — First lady Barbara Bush voiced sympathy for Soviet leader Mikhail Gorbachev and said that the political changes that have swept the world would not have happened without him. "I feel sorry for anybody who has problems," Mrs. Bush told reporters during a tour of Christmas decorations at the White House. "I hope people remember that without Gorbachev a lot of the good that happened in the world would not have happened," she said. Gorbachev's authority was deeply undercut by the decision of Russia, Belorussia and Ukraine to create a commonwealth of independent states.

'Honest mistake' blamed for offensive phrase on envelopes

COLUMBUS, Ohio (AP) — Up to 12,000 pieces of mail were stamped with an offensive phrase because of a technician's mistake, a postal service spokesman said. A worker testing an optical character scanner Saturday at the city's main post office downtown forgot to delete the phrase when he was called away to another job, Ed Johnson, director of marketing and communications for the post office, said Monday. He said the words "you bitch" were printed on 10,000 to 12,000 envelopes. The mismarked mail could appear in mailboxes anywhere in the country. Columbus postal authorities notified other post offices nationwide so they would know where the problem came from, Mr. Johnson said. "We had intended to have holiday greetings or 'Merry Christmas' as messages that go on the envelopes," Mr. Johnson said. "It turned out to be a bit different than that. It wasn't really a greeting, I think, in any sense of the word." He said the technician was horrified when he found out. The postal service did not identify the worker, but said he will face disciplinary action, although postal officials said the error was unintentional. Postal workers blocked the words out with a black marker on the few envelopes they could find.

Briton wins record damages in medical tragedy case

LONDON (R) — A Briton who suffered permanent, severe brain damage during routine surgery for haemorrhoids won record damages of £1.65 million (\$3 million) for medical negligence. The lump sum damages to Alan Tombs, 30, agreed under a high court settlement, are the highest to an adult in Britain. Legal experts said they were believed to be the second largest payment by an English court in a personal injury case. Mr. Tombs suffered a heart attack in April 1987 undergoing an operation at Sutton General Hospital, south of London, when carbon dioxide was wrongly administered during an anaesthetic. The mistake left Mr. Tombs, a married man, with devastating and irreversible brain damage. He is now looked after in hospital. The damages will be paid by the Sutton Local Health Authority, which admitted liability.

Bush signs CFE treaty

WASHINGTON (Agencies) — President George Bush has signed a treaty that aims to make massive cuts in conventional weapons in Europe and the former Soviet Union.

U.S. officials said that even with the relaxation of cold war tensions, adhering to the Conventional Forces in Europe (CFE) treaty is important to prevent some of the newly democratic Soviet republics from building up large armies.

"There are still a lot of conventional weapons over there and if the Soviet Union or its successors comply with this, it is a mechanism that gets them to reduce by large amounts the number of conventional weapons," said a U.S. official. "It would have a stabilising effect on the situation in Europe."

The Senate ratified the treaty on Nov. 25. It was originally signed in November 1990 by Mr. Bush and Soviet President Mikhail Gorbachev.

The Soviet Union never ratified it, but Mr. Gorbachev and leaders of the republics have said they will do so.

The 22-nation pact slashes conventional weapons from the Atlantic to the Urals, which would include the Baltics, Ukraine, Belorussia and Moldova.

It applies to aircraft, tanks, armour and artillery, and sets limits on the number of weapons that NATO and the former Warsaw Pact could station in Europe, and it has been largely outdated by the collapse of the Warsaw Pact and of the Soviet Union.

Mr. Bush Wednesday welcomed the European Community's (EC) steps towards economic and political union as laying the groundwork for a Europe able to take on larger responsibilities.

In a written statement, Mr. Bush said the United States was celebrating the results of the EC summit in Maastricht.

"The United States has long supported European unity because of our strong conviction

that it was good for Europe, good for the Atlantic partnership and good for the world," he said.

He said a strong, more united Europe is in America's interest.

"A more united Europe offers the United States a more effective partner, prepared for larger responsibilities," he said.

The president expressed pleasure that the Europeans agreed to strengthen the Western European Union and let it serve as the vehicle for increased European responsibility on defence matters.

"NATO will remain the essential forum for consultation among its members and the venue for agreement on policies bearing on the security and defence commitments of the allies," he said.

A poll released Wednesday showed 3-to-1 disapproval of President Bush's handling of the U.S. economy but 2-to-1 approval of his work in foreign affairs.

Mr. Bush, meanwhile, told reporters Wednesday he would "keep on fighting" for a capital gains tax cut, which he considers a key part of his strategy for reviving the sluggish U.S. economy. Democrats say the cut would help only the wealthy since the tax applies only to sales of property.

Mr. Bush turned aside a question on what else will be in the economic growth package that he will send to Congress next month.

The president, in a campaign-style swing through Chicago Tuesday, lashed out at "America first" critics, accusing them of favouring protectionist policies that would boomerang and cost Americans jobs.

The Cable News Network-Gallup poll showed respondents unhappy with Mr. Bush's handling of the economy by 73-to-22 per cent and domestic issues by 68-to-28 per cent.

The poll found that Mr. Bush still enjoys as overall positive job approval rating, by a margin of 52-42, and approval of his dealing with foreign affairs was 64-to-29. The margin of error in the poll was plus or minus three percentage points.

Delors welcomes EC union pact

STRASBOURG, France (R) — European Commission President Jacques Delors has grudgingly welcomed the new EC pact on monetary and political union but said the public would be baffled by its complexity.

"If one takes a historical perspective, this provides strong new impetus," the head of the European Community (EC) executive said of the treaty agreed by EC leaders in Maastricht this week.

Refraining from earlier outbursts, Mr. Delors spoke to the European Parliament in measured tones as he criticised aspects of the deal including the decision-making rules for the future common foreign and security policy.

"I am still worried about complexity of the procedures," he told the 518-member assembly. "Clarity is indispensable for citizens to understand what is being done."

His low-key tone contrasted with his description of these mechanisms in Strasbourg last month as "organised schizophrenia" because they were a hybrid between purely inter-governmental cooperation and EC procedures.

"The question is whether (EC) states are really aware that they share common interests and that they can best defend them together," Mr. Delors said.

Thursday, "Pessimists will wonder whether there is really a basic consensus among member states."

Dutch Prime Minister Ruud Lubbers, who chaired the summit, said it had achieved the best results it could.

"A decisive step has been taken but we cannot be happy, we have not reached our destination yet," he told the assembly. "Ultimately this will happen."

EC leaders agreed on the new treaty only after a long tug-of-war with British, the most sovereignty-conscious member, over giving the EC a greater say in labour laws.

Unable to sway Prime Minister John Major, his 11 colleagues went ahead without him and pledged they at least would use EC mechanisms to forge common social policies.

They also granted London an exemption allowing it to decide later whether it wants to join the planned single currency.

"I find it very unfortunate that the United Kingdom, in two important areas, was not willing to join," Mr. Lubbers said to loud applause from Euro-MPs.

Also in apparent reference to Mr. Major's objections, Mr. Lubbers lamented the limited new powers given to the European Parliament, which will gain the right to veto some EC laws.

"Apparently (some) colleagues

of mine feel they can just say 'no,'" he said.

Mr. Delors said he was glad the other 11 states had not watered down the final pact even more on social affairs and other issues to obtain Britain's agreement on all points.

"Should we have reduced our ambitions to get an agreement by the 12? We would have been back to square one," he said.

"Let's dream — I hope Britain will eventually catch up with us there, as it has always done everywhere else."

Meanwhile, former British Prime Minister Margaret Thatcher, a staunch European Community critic, gave her first public backing to her successor John Major over his deal on European union.

"I'm absolutely thrilled. I congratulated him," Mrs. Thatcher said after a party at a luxury London hotel Thursday night to celebrate her 40 years of marriage.

Her backing for his role in the EC treaty should help Mr. Major avoid a damaging split in the ruling Conservative Party over Europe before a general election he has to call by next June.

Mrs. Thatcher is a rallying point for a vociferous minority in the party who say further EC integration must be stopped because it erodes national sovereignty and will lead to a federal European state.

Germany expects Honecker to be extradited soon from Moscow

BERLIN (R) — Germany expects former Communist leader Erich Honecker to be extradited from Moscow soon despite Chile's decision not to force him out of its embassy there, Justice Minister Klaus Kinkel said Friday.

Mr. Kinkel said the fugitive former east German leader, 79, must face manslaughter charges

in Germany despite his age and appeals from friends for an amnesty.

Ordered to leave Russia by midnight Friday, Mr. Honecker has sought refuge in Chile's Moscow embassy, where Santiago says he can stay until Russian and Soviet leaders decide his fate.

"I assume Mr. Honecker's stay in the Chilean embassy will not

be long," Mr. Kinkel told a radio interviewer.

"The German government is insisting to the Chileans and the Russian and Soviet governments on Mr. Honecker's return."

Mr. Honecker, who has been in exile near Moscow since March after fleeing the country he ruled from 1971 until 1989, has appealed against the expulsion,

North, South Korea proclaim new era of reconciliation

SEOUL (R) — North and South Korea proclaimed the end of their entrenched enmity Friday, signing a pact to end the threat of another war on the Korean peninsula.

"We have now laid a solid foundation for peace and national unification with the fruit borne in the fifth round of North-South high-level talks," North Korean Premier Yon Hyong-Muk said as he returned to Pyongyang.

"Let's join in the grand unification march with all our strength," Mr. Yon said, ending a four-day visit that saw agreement on a historic inter-Korean non-aggression accord.

South Korean President Roh Tae-Woo called for an early summit meeting with 79-year-old President Kim Il-Sung who has ruled Stalinist North Korea since its founding in 1948.

Mr. Yon and his 89-member entourage crossed the heavily fortified border, the cold war's last frontier, after pledging that the North will redouble efforts to warm decades of frosty ties with

the South.

Friday's pact, signed by both Korean premiers, contains 25 articles providing measures to prevent the accidental outbreak of hostilities, calls for scientific, cultural and information exchanges, communication links to improve inter-Korean contact and an end to slander and subversion.

It allows — without specifying a timetable — the exchange of people, goods, mail, newspapers and broadcasts.

It also calls for replacement of the 1953 armistice ending the three-year Korean War with a peace treaty.

The North Koreans surprised many by exhibiting a considerable flexibility during the three days of talks in Seoul which were marked by unusual cordiality and capped by the signing of the accord that will provide a framework for inter-Korean relations with until reunification.

Seoul officials said they hoped the accord, which involved major concessions from the North, will

help the isolated state move towards greater openness.

The North and South, however, left unresolved the key issue of North Korea's suspected nuclear arms development and officials here fear that implementation of the non-aggression and reconciliation accord could hit a snag because of the nuclear controversy.

Working-level officials of both Koreas will meet at the border village of Panmunjom later this month to discuss Seoul's demand that North Korea submit its nuclear programme to international inspection.

The North insists that its nuclear programme is peaceful, protestations generally discounted by Seoul and its allies. Pyongyang has refused to consider outside inspection until the United States removed its nuclear weapons from South Korea.

"It is regrettable that the talks this time failed to produce a full agreement on the nuclear issue," President Roh was quoted as saying during a meeting with Mr.

Yon Friday.

"The issue affects the survival of our national people ... and we must achieve the goal of a nuclear-free Korean peninsula within this year," a presidential spokesman quoted Mr. Roh as saying.

Mr. Roh's statement strongly implied all U.S. nuclear weapons in South Korea would be withdrawn by the end of this year.

The president urged Mr. Yon to return to the North and work for an early summit with Mr. Kim, state television said.

Mr. Kim, known in North Korea as the "great leader," rarely travels abroad and has never met a South Korean president.

South Korean Premier Chung Won-Shik told Mr. Yon Wednesday that Seoul would allow the North to inspect U.S. and other facilities in the South for nuclear weapons once the North abandoned its quest to build a bomb.

Mr. Chung also called on the North to allow inspection of its own facilities.

"The North did not give a clear response to our nuclear inspection

proposal during the talks. They have to unconditionally accept our demands for removal of its nuclear reprocessing plants," South Korean spokesman Lee Tong-Pok said.

The two premiers will meet again in Pyongyang from Feb. 18 to 21 when the two sides will exchange formal ratifications by their respective parliaments which will put the agreement into effect.

The accord is the first major political agreement between the two Koreas, divided in 1945 and still technically at war from the 1950-53 Korean conflict.

Mr. Yon returned to Pyongyang after signing the non-aggression pact, the North's official Korean Central News Agency said.

Mr. Yon and his delegation were met by Yum Gt-Bok, vice chairman of the Committee for the Peaceful Reunification of the Fatherland, and other officials.

The agency, monitored in Tokyo, did not comment on the outcome of the talks.

NATO takes major steps in restructuring military

BRUSSELS (R) — NATO agreed to major changes that will slim down the alliance's command structure and lay the ground for smaller, multinational units as the key to the West's defences in the post-war era.

Alliance defence ministers meeting in Brussels agreed that the crisis in the Soviet Union did not affect the plans because the threat of a massive attack from the East no longer existed.

"The strategic concept remains as valid as ever. It remains the correct basis on which to proceed," British Defence Secretary Tom King told reporters.

NATO commands in Central and Northern Europe — the frontline during decades of confrontation with the now-dissolved Warsaw Pact — will be reorganised and slimmed down.

A U.S. general will remain in overall charge of alliance forces

on the continent.

The ministers also approved secret military guidelines for implementing an overall strategy that was approved by NATO leaders at a summit in Rome last month.

That strategy says NATO will have to rely on smaller, more mobile forces to defend against possible new threats to the West can be deployed from the Arctic to the Mediterranean.

The idea is to save money in an era of shrinking defence budgets while still maintaining strong enough forces to deter any would-be aggressor.

The United States, NATO's senior member and the backbone of the West's defence, is planning to cut its forces in Europe by half to around 150,000 by 1995. Total NATO forces in Central Europe will be reduced half by the same date.